ISSUE ONE

EXPLOSIVE CONSOLE, COMPUTER AND COIN-OP ENTERTAINMENT

RAZE

NOVEMBER 1990
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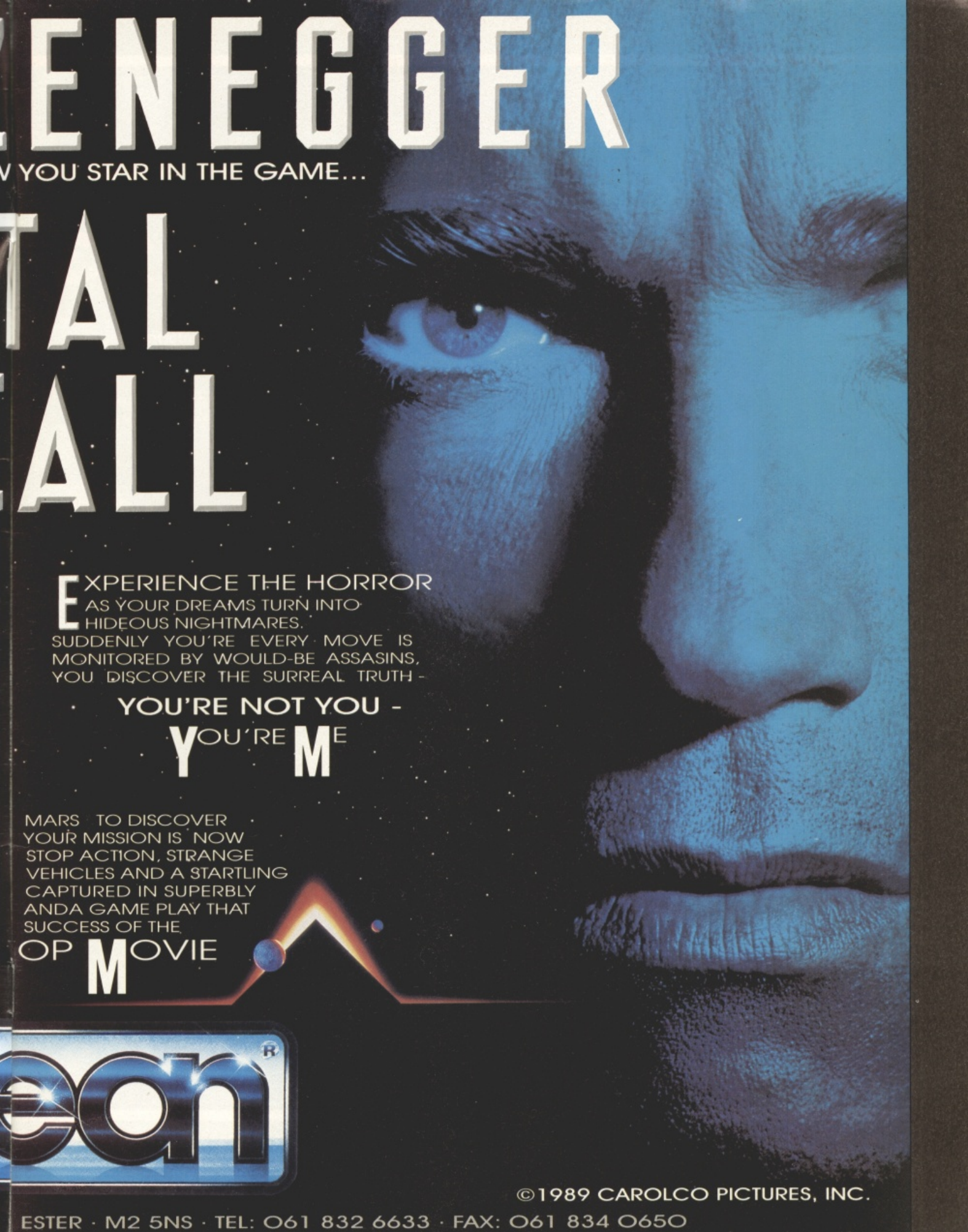
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YOU DISCOVER THE SURREAL TRUTH -
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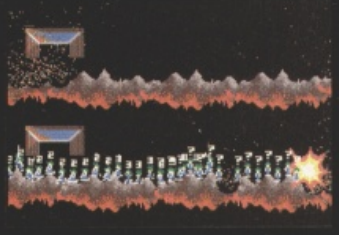
CONTENTS

Fast Forward	7
Sights on CD	12
Video Vaults	14
Comic Corner	15
Entertainment USA	18
Big In Japan	20
Which Console?	23
Hacks & Stacks	70
Budget Blitz	78
Free Play	82
Hot Slots	86
Neuroventure	90
Lettuce	98
Next Month	98



take a leap with DMA and the LEMMINGS...7

have a drink and a dive with JAMES POND...8

Gremlin challenge you to drive a LOTUS ESPRIT...49

FUTURE BASKETBALL...58

SHOOTING STARS...23

Game consoles are going supernova. With a phenomenal selection of powerful entertainment machines to choose from, and lots of arcade-quality software to run on them, there has never been a better time to own a console. Don't be drifting in space, check out the RAZE good guide to buying a console now.

ISSUE ONE

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RAZE

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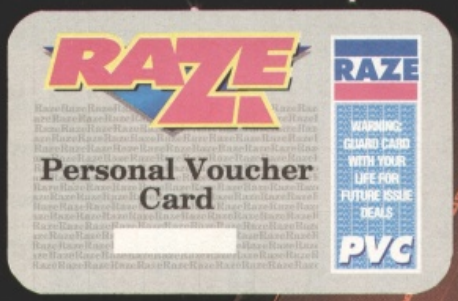

Your Personal Voucher Card is the entry ticket to a host of scrumptious competition prizes and special offers which will appear in this and the next few issues of RAZE — check out the compo on page **96** and RAZEcrave on page **94**

Consoles

ATARI LYNX	Slimeworld	42
GAME BOY	Paperboy	67
	The Amazing Spider-Man	67
MASTER SYSTEM	Super Monaco GP	62
MEGA DRIVE	Batman	41
	Super Monaco GP	62
NES	Batman	41
PC ENGINE	Devil Crash	32
	Hell Explorer	64

16-Bit

AMIGA	Flight of the Intruder	38
	Future Basketball	58
	Gold of the Aztecs	66
	International Soccer Challenge	60
	Manix	64
	Operation Spruance	36
	Rick Dangerous II	34
	Shadow of the Beast II	56
	Simulcra	44
	The Punisher	40
	Ziriax	60
ATARI ST	Flight of the Intruder	38
	Future Basketball	58
	Gold of the Aztecs	66
	International Soccer Challenge	60
	Manix	64
	Operation Spruance	36
	Rick Dangerous II	34
	Simulcra	44
	The Punisher	40
IBM PC	Flight of the Intruder	38
	International Soccer Challenge	60
	Operation Spruance	36
	The Punisher	40

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HELL RAZEN'

Welcome to a new era of entertainment. Every month RAZE will be crammed with definitive coverage of console, computer and coin-op entertainment.
But that's not all:

- ✔ **Exclusive scoops of the latest games and hardware developments – all from around the world as they hap pen. Just look what we've got hold of this issue: the Sega Mega Drive CD-ROM, details and pictures of the awesome R-360 arcade machine, *Devil Crash* on the PC Engine, *Shadow of the Beast II*...**
- ✔ **Authoritative and information-packed reviews of the very latest console and 16-bit computer games. Clearly-stated conclusions, walk-through sections, informative panels, hard facts. Check out *Future Basketball, Slimeworld, Rick Dangerous II*...**
- ✔ **A stylish design for a sophisticated readership. RAZE has the look that's guaranteed to take it through the Nineties and beyond. Seeing is believing!**
- ✔ **Three pulsating pull-out posters every month. To kick off there's Ocean's *Nightbreed*, Gremlin's *Turbo Esprit Challenge* and MicroProse's *Betrayal*.**
- ■ **See for yourself. We're sure you'll agree, RAZE is an absolute stunner.**

RAZE RAVERS

Julian Boardman

Don't brag about the size of your burger in front of Julian – you're liable to get a fat lip and a shirt full of ketchup and onions. In a previous life, he has been known to stack drinks, deal in doughnuts and test food at McDonald's. What hasn't been in Julian's mouth isn't worth eating.

Derek Chapman

RAZE's resident student reckons he's a bit of a Street Hawk on his rapid-red Suzuki A100 (with memory upgrade). Derek has been stopped by the local law four times this month for various offences including not having a rear L plate, driving up a one way street the wrong way, and doing handstands on his bike while riding through town.

Ian Chubb

The first of the team's boy racers – complete with red XR2 – is a man of three halves. We reckon he's an art editor, he claims he's a Mac operator, though he can often be found film planning (ie, ensuring he places pictures the wrong way up in the magazine rather than anyone else). Er, don't look now, Ian...

Les Ellis

Collects living furry things that dwell in dark places. In the beginning there were two – Vandenberg and Tawny – now there are six. The new additions haven't been named yet, so suggestions on a postcard to RAZE, Unit 3, etc. Les dreams of playing in Julian's band... or is it, Julian dreams of playing...

Jason Holborn

Does a roaring trade in computer hardware and software which he transports around town in his (red) XR3i Turbo between 7.30pm in the evening and 2am in the morning. Any money Jason makes gets spent on furry dice, go-faster stickers and prophylactics. Boy racer number two.

Shintaro Kanaoya

The only computer journalist we know who doesn't own a word processor or a computer. His excuse is that the Mega Drive will soon get a keyboard and it seems reasonable to assume a word processor will be one of the next major releases for the machine. Yes, probably, Shintaro.

Paul Rigby

If ever you want to know what the inside of an envelope looks like, Paul's your man. Not only does he deal in stiff A4, brown twist 'n' close, scented pink and yellow ones, but also in plain virgin white. The poor lad's definitely a sponge short of a padded jiffy.

Marshal M Rosenthal

His middle name is Money or Mayhem depending on his mood. New York isn't big enough for him and he has largely been attributed to causing the multi-billion dollar deficit plaguing the States. Whatever you do, don't give him your fax number.

Suzy Uki

The queen of the whip, chain and coin-op. This Bangkok-born beauty can often be found walking the streets of Hong Kong in search of the ultimate gay-cens. Nothing turns her on more than a big pulsating arcade machine with powerful hydraulics.

Wally Foot

Hoping to join the elite club of RAZE boy racers this month when he takes delivery of his new Citroen AX GT (red, of course). One day he hopes to turn into Richard Gere, but until then will just collect all his films. Has a strange passion for Japanese girls as Suzy Uki found out to her cost.

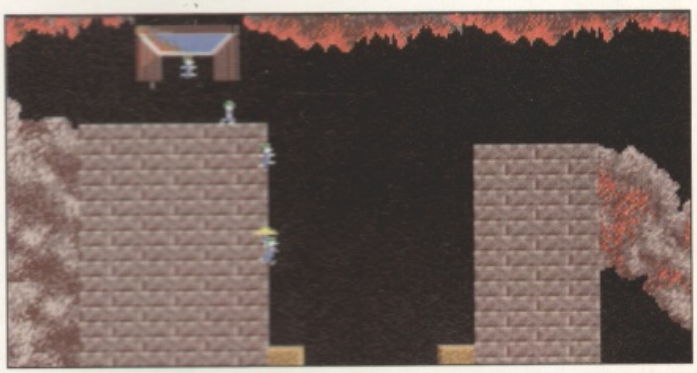
Richard Monteiro

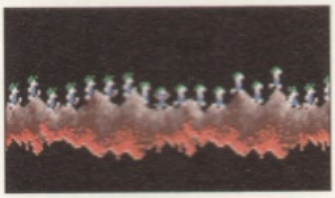
Mint Aero? Monteiro? Geddit? Never mind. Also known as the lunch editor because he's a few snacks short of a full meal. Boy racer number three. Probably the fastest of the bunch with his leader-of-the-pack blue Citroen 2CV.

RAZE playing the game to perfection.

FAST FORWARD

JUMPING JOCK SPLAT!





Walker's head look very nice, but it will be difficult to create a playable game from it. Also coming up are PC Engine versions of *Shadow of the Beast* and *Ballistix*, possibly even a FM Towns version of the latter.

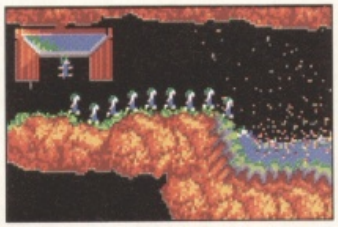
Dave hopes that future computer releases from DMA Design will also come out on console. His favourite at the moment is the Mega Drive, and he is confident that the Mega Drive will take off in the UK. While

After avoiding numerous motorway patrol cars, Cole Trickle made it to Dundee and spoke to DMA Design – the guys behind *Menace* and *Blood Money* – about their future console and computer releases

It will come as no surprise that Dave Jones's background lies on the Spectrum. The man who programmed *Blood Money* for Psygnosis gave Amiga owners the definition of playability. *Blood Money* was primarily a shoot-'em-up but contained enough strategy to keep all types of players addicted for months.

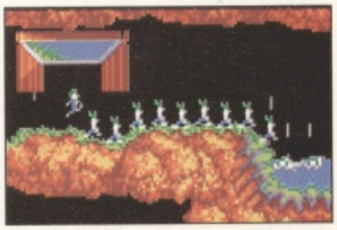
Dave Jones hasn't produced anything since *Blood Money*, preferring to develop his own company, DMA Design, bring in outside programmers, and expand his offices in Dundee.

Lemmings is the first game to come from DMA Design since their year-long absence. It's a strange little game, programmed by the big man himself. The game revolves around hundreds of small lemmings who walk about mindlessly over various types of landscapes. Only you can prevent them walking off cliffs or jumping in rivers.



Cutie Poo is another weird game featuring a breed of small animals called tribbles. The game features 239 individual frames of animation, concentrating on a cartoon look.

Future releases may include a development of Dave Jones's own Walker demo. The raytraced graphics and 81 animations of the



■ Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to Heaven we go.

HEAD OVER HEELS

Lemmings is like no other game on Earth. It is, quite simply, original. Sound, graphics, gameplay... all like you've never seen them before.

Lemmings, as you may know, are small vole-like creatures who have a strange affinity for mass destruction of themselves. That's why you must save the poor creatures by leading them safely through 100 levels.

As you may have guessed, this isn't as easy as it first seems. Many elements contribute to the demise of lemmings, not least your ability to keep an eye on them all. As soon as these guys start walking, there's no stopping them – short of blowing them up. And it's no good blowing them up because you have to ensure the safe exit of a certain number from the screen.

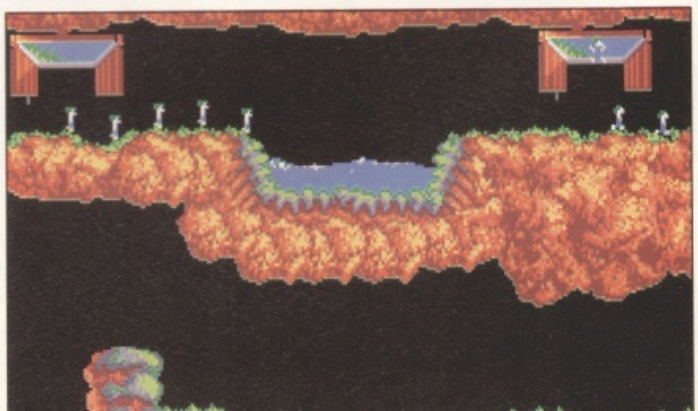
The key to success is making the little guys work for you. Each lemming can be allocated a specific task, which he will carry out dutifully until it's over. For instance, if you click on one of the lemmings and turn him into a Builder, he'll start constructing a bridge. All the time, of course, the other 90 or so lemmings are walking backwards and forwards aimlessly. It is here that you may wish to use a Blocker. A Blocker will just stand there, turning around all fellow lemmings that hit him. However, if you want to get rid of the Blocker, you have to blow him up – a small sacrifice to save so many.

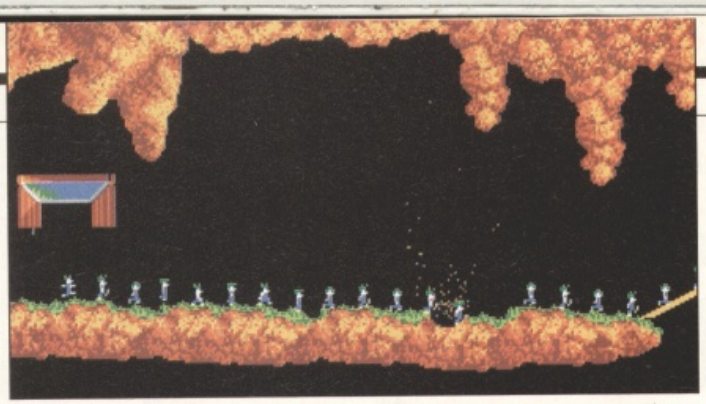
Saving lemmings is what it's all about. At the beginning of each level you'll be told how may have to be saved, the rate at which they drop on screen, and the name of the level (which often gives a clue to what horror Dave Jones has in store for you).

CONSTRUCTION KIT

The levels on *Lemmings* were designed by all at DMA Design. Using a level designer, each person was asked to contribute their own fiendish creations. Dave Jones has designed the game so that it can accommodate a construction kit if they ever decided to release their designer – let's hope they do.

■ Left of the screen, five lemmings on their way to certain death. Right of the screen, more lemmings getting killed as they walk straight into a mantrap.



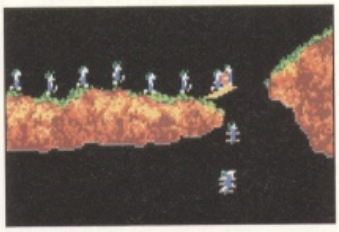


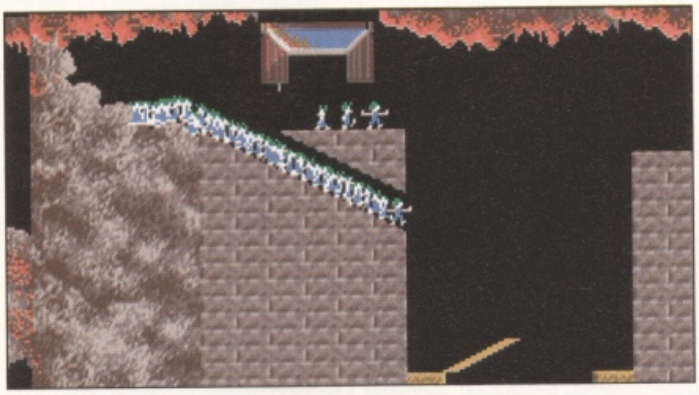
■ Er, I think you'd better put a Blocker there, because the guy building the bridge doesn't look in a hurry to get it finished.

LEMMINGS LACKIES

Amiga – **Dave Jones**
Atari ST – **Dave Jones + Mike Dailly**
IBM PC – **Russell Kay**
Graphics/animation – **Gary Timmons**
Backgrounds etc – **Scott Johnston**

DMA games may not be seen on the Nintendo because of licensing restrictions, he describes Sega as "more lenient" and Mega Drive versions of *Cutie Poo* and *Lemmings* are already being planned.





Like most programmers, Dave bemoans the fact that present day storage systems on computers are not up to the technology they run on. The PC Engine's *Beast* is only going to be available on CD-ROM and Dave can't wait to use his redundant FM Towns machine for something.

The future's certainly bright, and although you won't see Dave behave like one of his lemmings and jump head first into something, he is ready for any developments in the foreseeable future.

SOUND ATTACK!

Lemmings contains 25 tunes! Some of them you might recognise, like the A-Team, Mission Impossible, the old Batman TV theme and Scooby Doo. Are these wild 'n' crazy guys or what?

BEAST TURNING JAPANESE

It's true, *Shadow of the Beast* on the PC Engine. DMA Design are handling the conversion, and hope to have the game finished by mid-1991. The reason for the long wait is that the game is being completely redesigned. You'll still recognise it, but you'll also come across swords, magic and more problems. The programmer, Mike Dailly, is adding the extra elements to exploit the Engine's CD-ROM and target the game at the Japanese audience. Dailly describes NEC's masterful unit as 'gorgeous' but thinks his development system is 'tacky'. Still, he's managed to get 17 layers of parallax scrolling out of it, so it can't be all that bad.

There's also news of *Ballistix* on the PC Engine and FM Towns, to be programmed by DMA's Russell Kay. This, too, will be a remix of the original 16-bit computer version.

■ Turn to page 56 for a full review of *Shadow of the Beast II*.

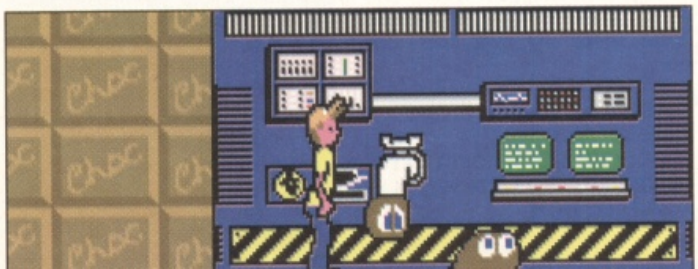
TRIBBLE TROUBLE

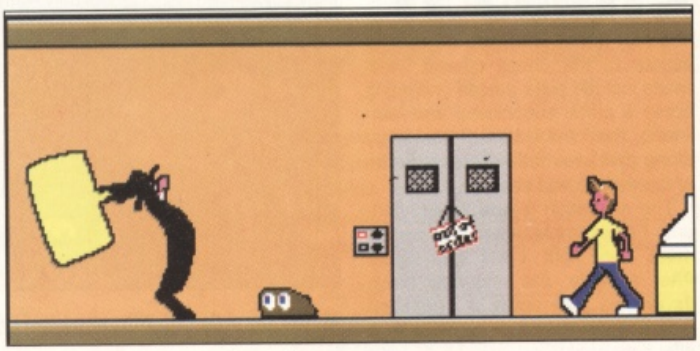
Cutie Poo is one of the most visually impressive games of the year. You are placed in the middle of a building, with six small, furry animals at your side. These little guys are the tribbles. The lovable little furballs are being chased by the evil Dr Mallet, who will fly in (via backpack rotor) and try to smack the tribbles with his mallet. You must lead the shivering characters out of the level and onto the next.

The game is full of humorous touches, like your horn which you can toot at the tribbles if they start to wander off on their own, or the 128 different names of the tribbles (Elvis, Josh, Bob, etc). Animation is superb, with a massive 239 frames for the main character (458 if you include the flipping used for movement in the opposite direction). Gary Timmons' graphics are some of the most vivid you'll see – bright red, blinding yellow and thick black lines around the objects.

Programmed by Tony Colgan, who doesn't look too dissimilar to a tribble himself, *Cutie Poo* is expected to come out on Amiga, Atari ST, PC Engine and Mega Drive – could this be the first truly original game to appear on computer and console?

■ At the start of the level, the tribbles drop out of a tap. Josh is already out, here comes Tina.





■ Oh no, you're too late. Smack! There goes another tribble.

BETRAYAL

RAINBIRD ■ POLITICAL STRATEGY

In *Betrayal* you play a knight – and a very dissatisfied one at that. Not content with your lot in life, you embark on a trip to make a name for yourself. Being a chess player, you soon realise that the most powerful position in the land would be a king or a bishop. However, no-one would believe that you, a lowly knight, would be worthy of such a title, so a cunning plan is needed. By installing your own puppet king or bishop in the land, you could exercise real power without having to reveal yourself to your potential subjects.

You must conquer towns, acquire weaponry, and convince followers of your best intentions. The quick reflexes gained in your ludo playing days will come in useful when you come into conflict with any of the populace. And it's just as well the family had a Monopoly set because financial management of your domain is an integral part of the game.

With all this board game playing, I'm surprised you had time to train to become a knight.

■ Check out the *Betrayal* poster on page 46.

GAME NAME: **BETRAYAL**
PRODUCER: **MICROPROSE**
VERSIONS: **AMIGA (£29.99), ATARI ST (£29.99), IBM PC (£29.99)**

■ **Train your men wisely; too many assassins and not enough spies could leave you without valuable information about your enemy.**

■ **The dosh just keeps rolling in. Life as a bishop isn't all that bad.**

■ **Your map of the land. Different coloured flags indicate who controls what.**

BATTLE CHESS II

Interplay have introduced an oriental flavour to the chess classic. New twists include extra pieces (including horse & carts, councillors, and ministers), the introduction of gameplay along grid lines rather than squares and a river to add scenery.

The animation is absolutely hilarious. For example, when two pawns meet, they fight it out with pikes. After a while, the offensive pawn throws his pike down in frustration and wallops the other pawn with a nifty right hook!

GAME NAME: **BATTLE CHESS II**
PRODUCER: **ELECTRONIC ARTS**
VERSIONS: **AMIGA (£24.95), ATARI ST (£tba), IBM PC**
AVAILABLE: **DECEMBER, tba, NOW**

BARD'S TALE III

Gather round all ye adventurers. There's news afoot that the third in the *Bard's* series is ready for release. Subtitled *Thief of Fate*, the game is again a multi-level multi-character game. Enhancements mean the game will be able to import characters from *Bard's Tale 1* and *2*, *Ultima 3* and *4*, and *Wizardry 1* to *3*. Impressive stuff.

The party of adventurers can be built of male or female genres in up to 13 character classes. Travel is through 84 dungeon levels and seven different dimensions, with 100 magic spells and over 500 monsters!

GAME NAME: **BARD'S TALE III – THIEF OF FATE**
PRODUCER: **ELECTRONIC ARTS**
VERSIONS: **AMIGA (£24.99)**
AVAILABLE: **NOW**

PREVIEW POSTSCRIPT

★ Electronic Arts are keeping busy at the moment. As well as the products previewed on this page, they have *Fountain of Dreams* (IBM PC £24.99), a sci-fi roleplaying game, and *Lord of the Rings Volume One* (IBM PC £29.99), the first in the roleplaying trilogy, in October.

★ A new name on the software front this month is Vulture Publishing. Their first game is a futuristic football game called *Pro Soccer 2190*. From screenshots, it looks like a side-on *Speedball* – and that can't be bad, can it?

★ Good news for console and IBM PC owners. Activision announced their increased support for the two formats this month as they revealed their plans for the Nineties. Their parent company in the US, Mediagenic, have just announced that they are the first non-Japanese licensee for the new Nintendo Super Famicon. Read on...

★ 8-bit NES owners can expect *Ghostbusters II* soon, followed by *Predator* and *Rad Gravity* later in the year as Activision demonstrate their commitment to consoles.

★ The latest coin-op conversion from Activision is *Atomic Robokid*, an eight-way parallax scrolling shoot-'em-up on Amiga and Atari ST.

★ Electronic Arts have a couple of goodies on the way: *Immortal* and *Stormovik*. In *Immortal* you must find your master, Mordamir, who lies deep in a labyrinth of caverns infested with powerful arcane objects, trolls, spiders, weird sea monsters and so on. Amiga and ST version due in October priced £24.95. *Stormovik* sends you on deadly missions in the Sukhoi SU-25 Soviet Attack Fighter. Out on PC priced £29.99.

★ Late October will see the release of *Xiphos*, a space simulator featuring digitised back drops and numerous animated 3-D objects, on ST, Amiga and PC. If it plays as good as it looks...

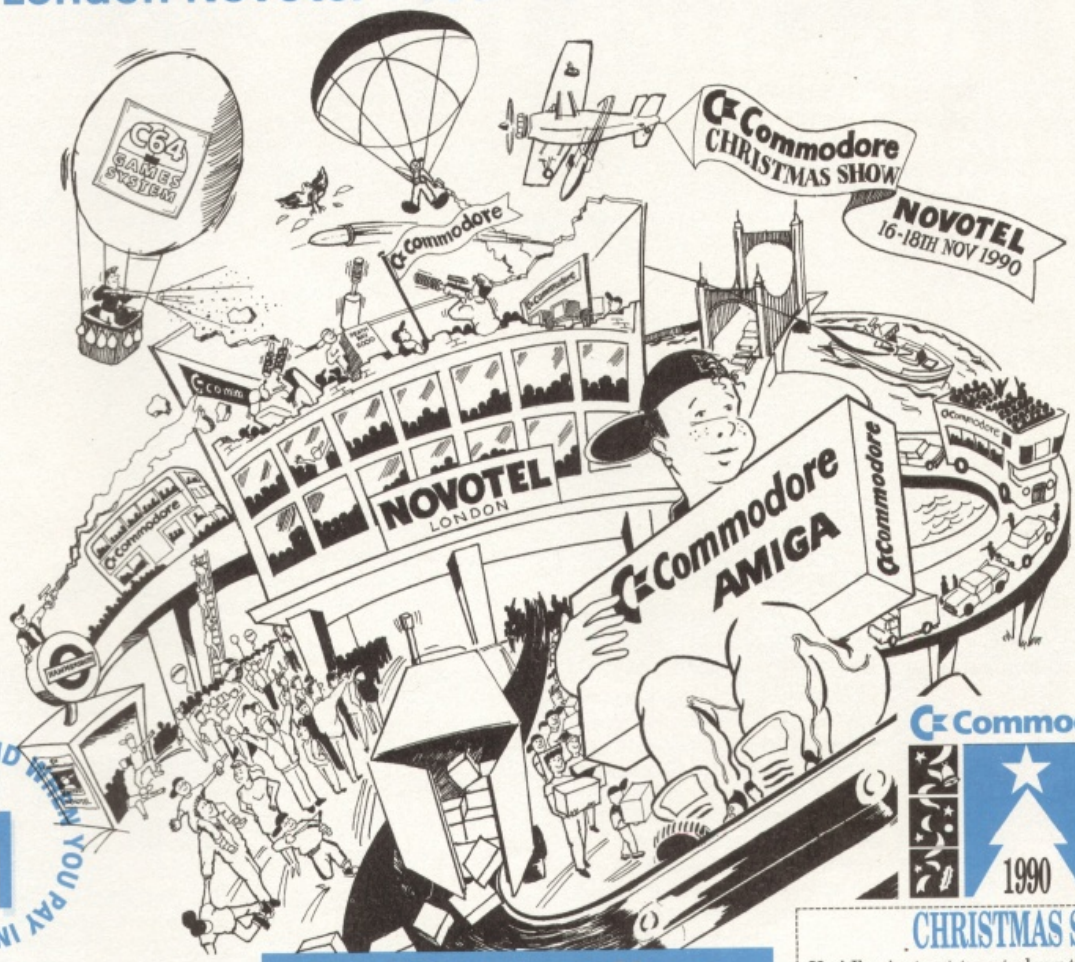
★ Digital Integration are set to unleash *ATF II* some time in September. Hailed as the thinking man's shoot-'em-up, *ATF II* takes off from where the original 8-bit landed. Essentially you fly around a grid battling enemy planes. Out on ST, Amiga and PC soon.

★ *Wings of Death* is Thalion's next release on 16-bit formats. Set in a fantasy world, you have to find a spell to change you back to a human. To do this you must penetrate the evil witch Xandrilla's domain. Essentially you must shoot everything that comes close.

It's big! It's loud!

It's the Commodore Christmas Show

London Novotel • 16th-18th November 1990



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COD 'N' CHIPS TWICE*

A fish with a licence to k(r)ill tries to save the world. Julian Boardman is sent to investigate, packs his Walther PPK, and finds himself out of his depth...

This was to be my first real mission. "M" had decided I was ready, that it was time – either that or no-one else would do it. My brief was to travel to Derbyshire, make contact with a certain Steve Bak and infiltrate his organisation, Vectordean. Ultimately, I had to meet the twisted young mastermind behind *James Pond*, one Chris Sorrell.

I made my first contact outside Derby station; Steve was waiting for me – someone must have informed him of my passage. I quickly cased his conspicuously inconspicuous Ford Escort for hidden microphones – the place seemed clear. The scar down the right side of his face and the white cat on the bak (sic) seat were not normal, that was for sure.

I met Steve Bak outside the station. You may remember this prolific programmer from a while back (he programmed *Karate Kid II*, *Goldrunner* and *Leatherneck*). He now owns his own company, Vectordean, producing games for software houses. But it was not really his tale I was interested in, more Chris Sorrell's, one of Steve's team of designers, coders, graphics artists, teaboys. In general, the main skivvy behind Vectordean's latest game, *James Pond: Underwater Agent*. (He also had a big part in *Yolanda* but don't let that worry you, he's improved since then.)

James Pond has an undeniable, New Age, green feel to it, and although Chris tells me that it's not a game with a deliberate message, I think on a subliminal level the hints must surely be there. The game is 12 separate missions, each with its own objective. The majority are definitely ozone-friendly: rescuing some lobsters from cages, destroying an Acme Oil rig, preventing the culling of seals in the Arctic, removing toxic waste from the

"We know who you are, Mr Boardman. For you, this is the end of the line..."

Mediterranean. Capitalists are also catered for with one level requiring the retrieval of gold from a ship wreck.

Don't worry though, this game is not designed for Guardian readers. Our hero, Jim, known as Double-Bubble Seven, is a fish, and a damn smooth one at that – have you ever seen a fish wearing a top hat? Mainly he travels alone, but is sometimes accompanied by a demented oyster. Jim's pad is a quiet, secluded little place – it couldn't really be much else at the bottom of the sea – complete with all the requisite mod-cons afforded to such a highly paid professional: satellite dish, VCR, secret weapons lab (probably... it's a secret), etc. But you won't find Jim entertaining mermaids at his pad unless he's in tiptop condition. Take his hair, for instance (what do you mean "fish haven't got hair"? ever seen Billy the fish): "After a hard day's work saving the world, I just *can't* do a thing with it!". Of course, without his shades, the guy can't operate either. If things at sea go really bad, he will usually hit the bottle; whisky, of course. However, after a short tipple, Double-Bubble Seven often finds himself a bit out of control. Ever tried swimming while under the influence – you shouldn't. Even fish have trouble staying in a straight line.

Jim's workplace is constantly changing. One day he could be swimming through shipwrecks in the Mediterranean, the next day it could be the Arctic or the North Sea, where he's bound to run into his old adversaries, Acme Oil. Being such a clever fish, our hero can occasionally trek into shore and continue his quest for a cleaner world on land.

■ The suave, sophisticated, scaley presence of Double-Bubble Seven in Millenium's James Pond: Underwater Agent.

His antics are enjoyed by all who co-exist in his environment: puffer fish, vampire fish, yellow submarines, British lager-loXuts, chainsaw fish, piranhas with evil grins, and, to cap it all, the ghost of Captain Bluebeard. Life is not all women and witty jokes for this special agent.

James Pond: Underwater Agent is essentially a platform game, but so much effort has gone into making it original and extremely playable that it should be a monster hit. It's the little touches that Chris Sorrell has put in – the expressions of the characters, the landscaping – that make it worth searching for. The game is released in October, and not a moment too soon. A new breed of hero is needed... Not a duck, though, a fish!

■ A nice homely little place where a hard-worked fish can come and rest his fin.

it's all right, I heard you the first time.

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PREVIEW POSTCRIPT

★ Activision's conversion of the Irem coin-op *Dragon Breed* is ready to pounce on Amiga (£24.99) and Atari ST (£24.99) in November. For those unaware of the coin-op, it's an action-packed, sideways scrolling shoot-'em-up. What do you mean you think you might have seen it. You can't of, it's like nothing else in the arcades. Did I mention the end-of-level baddies.

★ More news on the coin-op front as Domark release their conversion of the tough Tengen game, *Badlands* (AMIGA £19.99, ATARI ST £19.99, IBM PC £24.99). It comes from the designers of *Super Sprint* and is in the same vein. Three cars compete at once to bash and bang their way around a track viewed from above. If it's anywhere near as playable as *Super Sprint*, then we'll be in for a treat.

★ Anyone remember Tony Crowther? He was a peroxide-blond C64 programmer from way back. Anyhow, the guy's back in action now with the release of *Captive* (AMIGA £24.99, ATARI ST £24.99 – OCTOBER; IBM PC £29.99 – NOVEMBER), a complex action adventure.

★ Spaced-out screen veteran Buck Rogers appears on computer soon from SSI. The release details were unavailable at our deadline, but we all hope Buck, Wilma and Tweeky will be given major roles.

★ US Gold release *Operation Harrier* this month on Amiga (£24.99), Atari ST (£24.99) and IBM PC (£29.99). Memories of the classic *Harrier Attack* are soon shattered as you find yourself in the Middle East surrounded by zooming jets and aggressive land forces.

★ MicroProse have a lot going on at the moment. They've just signed up with Nintendo to produce console versions of *Silent Service* and *Pirates* (to appear in autumn of 1991), and their *F-15 Strike Eagle* has just been released in the States in coin-op form. The UK cabinet should be reaching the shores as I write. MicroProse hope to sell between 8,000 and 10,000 units worldwide this year. Read on...

■ Future software releases from the Tetbury-based software giant include a couple of sequels – *Silent Service II* (IBM PC £39.99) and *UMS II* (AMIGA £29.99, ATARI ST £29.99, IBM PC £34.99) – and a World War One aerial combat game called *Knights of the Sky* (IBM PC £tba)

SUBBUTEO

ELECTRONIC ZOO ■ SOCCER SIMULATION

Yeah, that's right, Subbuteo. Bet you want to go and get the old game out of the attic now – well, wait until you've read this issue.

Electronic Zoo have just tied up a deal with Waddington to produce a computer version of Subbuteo. Goliath Games, the people responsible for *Tracksuit Manager* and *Boxing Manager*, have been given the difficult task of creating the board game feel on computer.

The game incorporates Goliath's tried and tested artificial intelligence which enables the player to pit his wits against three computer levels. It also features a "unique aspect" which displays the Subbuteo 'table-top' from several angles, and a useful zoom-in/out facility – sounds a bit like MicroProse's *3-D Pool* to me.

■ Les and Julian enjoy finger flickin' fun on the board game original.

GAME NAME: **SUBBUTEO**
PRODUCER: **ELECTRONIC ZOO**
VERSIONS: **AMIGA (£24.99), ATARI ST (£24.99), IBM PC (£24.99)**
AVAILABLE: **OUT NOW**

ROGUE TROOPER

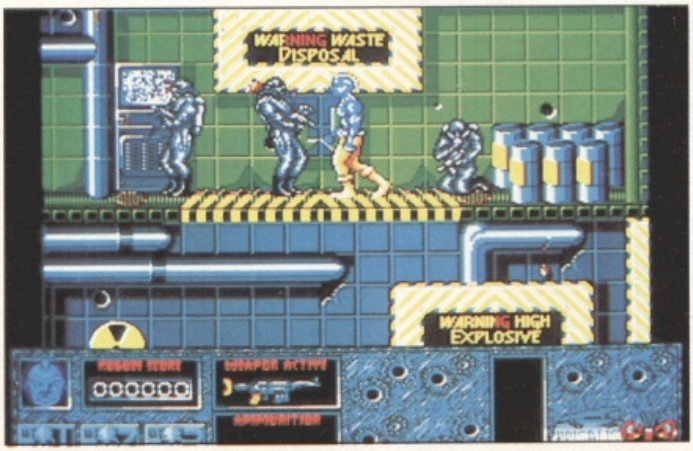
KRYSALIS ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

Readers of the futuristic sci-fi magazine 2000 AD will be familiar with the character of Rogue Trooper. Those who are not need only know that he's a genetically engineered trooper who thinks of himself as the last of the GIs, "the lone clone of galactic warfare".

Rogue Trooper is set in a galaxy of the future where two groups – the Norts and the Southers – are constantly at war. In response to the Norts' chemical weapons, the Southers have developed an army of killing machines immune to the poisonous gases.

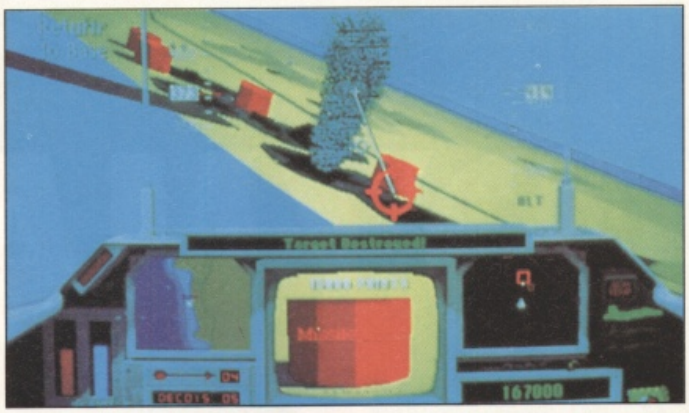
Due to treachery within the Southers' ranks, all but one of their machines were killed. The eponymous trooper must now sort out the good guys from the bad, infiltrate the enemy lines, and defeat the Norts.

■ The game is interspersed with static screens telling the story and giving the game a comic feel.

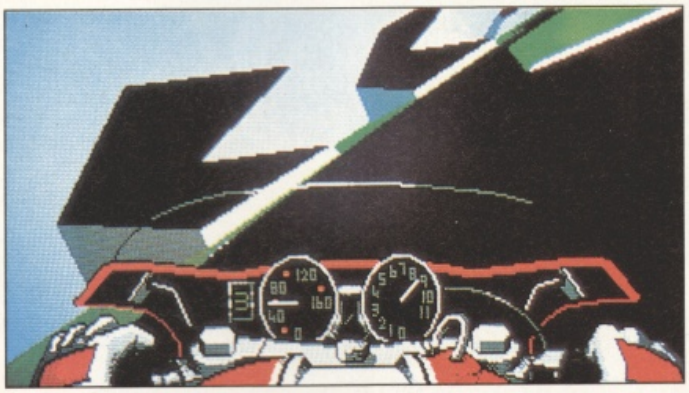


GAME NAME: **ROGUE TROOPER**
PRODUCER: **KRYSALIS**
VERSIONS: **AMIGA (£24.95), ATARI ST (£24.95)**
AVAILABLE: **OCTOBER**

■ Rogue Trooper: storming onto Amigas and STs everywhere this month.



■ Domark get Bad, as the sequel to *Super Sprint* is released.



■ Wooo. Sharp turn. Don't touch the brakes or you'll end up in the stand.

TEAM SUZUKI

GREMLIN GRAPHICS ■ RACING SIMULATION

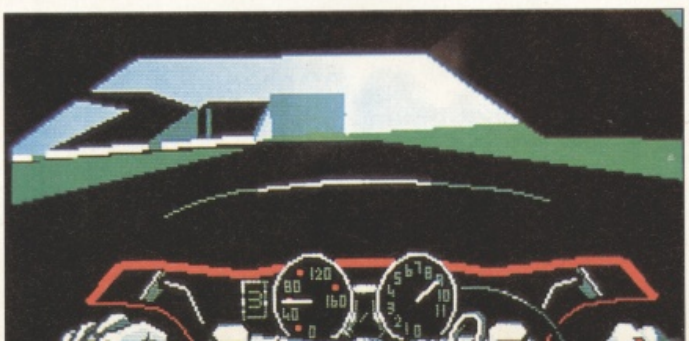
If Gremlin's *Turbo Esprit Challenge* (previewed on page 49) doesn't grab you by the braces and say "ride me", then their *Team Suzuki* is liable to tickle your feet at least.

The company's latest racing release has had immense support from top motorcycle racing team, Suzuki. They even supplied the programmers at Gremlin with videos of race action taken from cameras placed on the front of Suzuki bikes. The view and graphics are very similar to that of Accolade's *The Cycles*, but Gremlin hope it will be the fastest, smoothest bike sim yet.

Like *Hard Drivin'* the game features a useful replay option with which you can watch all those spectacular crashes over and over again.

GAME NAME: **TEAM SUZUKI**
PRODUCER: **GREMLIN GRAPHICS**
VERSIONS: **AMIGA (£tba), ATARI ST (£tba)**
AVAILABLE: **tba**

■ Lots of tunnels, hills and chicanes in *Team Suzuki*.



Steve Slick's VIDEO VAULTS

The coolest man in town reviews the hottest videos around

THE DEATH OF THE INCREDIBLE HULK (PG) 94 mins RENTAL

David Banner is posing as a janitor at a government laboratory, the world believing him dead. He sneaks into the private lab of Dr Platt to help his research in to the hidden strengths within all humans. It was this line of experimentation that caused David to become the Hulk, the savage green superhuman he transforms into when angered. The two gifted scientists work together, with the ultimate aim of ridding David of his alter-ego.

The Hulk takes a back seat in this movie-length episode of the TV series, Lou Ferrigno's spray-painted muscles occasionally appearing to remind you what the movie's about. The Death of the Incredible Hulk is more of a thriller than the average Hulk story, and a highly entertaining one at that. It's involving and well-paced, helped by Bixby's sometimes literal but generally good direction and acting. The Hulk himself will put many people off but this is a pleasing, viable alternative to most rental videos.

AMAZON WOMEN ON THE MOON (15) 82 mins £9.99

Bit of an oddity, this. It's a collection of 20 short comedy stories, ranging in length from about 30 seconds to five minutes, and as the titles say, starring "lots of actors".

Through its running time, *Amazon Women*'s stories vary in effectiveness and humour. The five sections directed by John Land are the best, but Joe Dante's are not far behind. As none are lengthy the worst ones don't affect the package; the real problem is that it relies on impact and throw-away humour. That's fine on rental – the 82 minutes fly by very entertainingly – but £9.99's too much for something you'll enjoy and perhaps watch just once.

DOCTOR WHO: THE DOMINATORS (U) 121 mins £9.99

The Doctor (Patrick Troughton) lands the TARDIS on the planet Dulkis, at the site of the peace-loving Dulcians' only nuclear test. But the radiation has gone, puzzling both the Doc and a Dulcian survey team. The brutal Dominator race are at the root of it and, with the aid of their robots, the Quarks, they are marking points on the planet's surface for an unknown but undoubtedly dastardly reason. The rulers of the planet are an apathetic bunch so it's up to the Doc and friends to save Dulkis.

The Dominators is a traditional Doctor Who story, ie, it's all rather predictable, but in a friendly, comforting manner. In fact, the biggest problem with *The Dominators* is that the credits for each episode have been left in – highly tedious. Battling through, it's great TV sci-fi of yesteryear (1965) and classic Doctor Who.

TOP TEN VIDEO RENTALS (SEPTEMBER)

1 Shirley Valentine (15)
2 Roadhouse (18)
3 Parenthood (PG)
4 Back to the Future Part II (PG)
5 Lock Up (18)
6 Turner and Hooch (PG)
7 Casualties of War (18)
8 Shocker (18)
9 See No Evil, Hear No Evil (PG)
10 Earth Girls are Easy

SHEER DYNA

SIGHTS ON CD

The future is here. CD technology has arrived. You've heard it before, but we can prove it. To mark the occasion, RAZE is the first computer entertainment magazine to have a regular column dedicated entirely to the world of Compact Disc Interaction (CDI). Each month we'll be combing the world for the latest technological developments and software releases. This month, Paul Rigby talks to Dynamix, an American company at the forefront of the modern technology

Dynamix are rapidly becoming a major player in the run up to the CD software explosion. Their production techniques are slick, professional, even movie-like. Their technical knowledge is immense as their past products (*A-10* and *David Wolf: Secret Agent*) have also doubled as CD experiments.

As Dynamix are now part of the Sierra corporation, they have the finance to back up their ambition. In short, Dynamix are gearing themselves up to be one of the market leaders in, what they term, Motion Video.

No announcements have been made, however, we – the futuretech scribes at RAZE – reckon that both of Dynamix's new titles, *Rise of the Dragon* and *Heart of China*, will be swiftly converted to CD. In fact, I will bet the Editor's Ferrari that we'll see both games on CDTV and PC CD.

The artwork on *Rise of the Dragon* is completely hand-drawn by one of the graphic artists who used to work for a major comic-book company. They've all been hand-inked and airbrushed, water-coloured and pencilled. You end up with these really gorgeous paintings that are transferred into the computer with a colour scanner. The backgrounds for *Heart of China* are done in a similar way with digitised actors overlaid onto them. (Pictured: artists shy Mark Brenneman, left, and Shawn Sharp, right.)

The game operates in a similar way to HyperCard [on the Apple Mac]. It's entirely point-and-click. If you click on a bottle of beer, a dialogue box will say something like 'Bio Beer'. If you click on a gun, a little thought box may appear saying, 'Never go anywhere without extra ammo – you never know when you're going to need it'. You can click on objects and drag them into your inventory, too. (VGA screen, *Rise of the Dragon*.)

There'll be over 50 locations in each of the games. Each main location will have sub-locations built-in. As an example, in *Dragon* you see your bedroom, move the cursor on top of your videophone, click on that, zoom in and you're then sitting in front of your videophone. This is considered a secondary room within the bedroom.(Artwork, *Rise of the Dragon*.)

MITE!

Neither game is linear. You can wander aimlessly all over the place without getting anything done, talking to people without getting information because you're going to the wrong place. If you ignore what you've been told or what you're supposed to be doing you can still go wherever you please. The games operate in a real-time environment. The games are very flexible allowing the player a lot of choices – probably too many. Hints books will definitely be necessary. There'll be about 40-50 hours of gameplay in there. (VGA screen, *Heart of China*.

There are many endings to *Heart of China*. Will 'Lucky' Jake Masters get the girl? Here he's taking a rest before the next digitising session.

Communication works in two ways. Firstly, conversation will be initiated by someone who you're trying to get past. For instance, the guards will not let you into the bar in *Rise of the Dragon* if you're carrying a gun. They will say something to you and you will be allowed to choose from a menu of responses. Each one of the responses has other responses – right down into this huge communications tree structure which is also linked to items included in your inventory. So if you introduce a photograph into the conversation, the computer character may recognise the photograph and take the dialogue in a different direction. (VGA screen, *Rise of the Dragon*.)

Each game will have numerous endings depending on where you go and what you do. (A whole wide world to explore in *Heart of China*, artwork.)

THE INSIDE STORY

★ In *Heart of China*, you are down-and-out WWI pilot 'Lucky' Jake Masters. Your task is to rescue the kidnapped daughter of a very powerful man who has made one or two enemies over in China.

H *Rise of the Dragon* is set in a bleak future similar to that of the film Blade Runner. Ironically, you play a guy called Blade Hunter, on the trail of the evil drug baron, Deng Hwang.

COMPACT STORIES

● Developers are universal in their praise of Commodore's hi-fi lookalike, CDTV. Seen as the number one development machine, the CDTV is referred to as the trojan horse that will '...bring CD into the home'. Unfortunately due to Commodore's poor financial figures for the last quarter, the CDTV has been put on hold for the immediate future.

● Future CD-ROM releases for the PC Engine are the ever-popular *Ys*, Cinemaware's *It Came From the Desert*, and their latest release *TV Sports: Hockey* (complete with statistics editing and roster handling).

● Rumour has it that Fujitsu, developer of the luxurious FM Towns, approached all of the big potential CD developers (Lucasfilm, Sierra, etc) with a $100,000 incentive to develop original CD titles. However, worries have recently surfaced after Fujitsu stopped encouraging developers morally and financially. Now the word on the streets is that the planned FM Towns release in the States and in Europe will be delayed. Others are saying that it will never happen.

● Did you know that it costs around 50 cents to produce a standard 5.25-inch floppy disk, but only $1.50 to produce a CD. Three times the price for (in the CDTV's case) well over 1500 times the capacity. What a bargain!

● Origin will produce conversions of *Ultimas I, II & III* (a compilation on one CD) and *Ultima VI* for the FM Towns. All of these conversions will be developed in Japan.

● Origin's new 3-D combat space flight simulator, *Wing Commander* (changed from the original Wing Leader) will appear on the CDTV, as will *Ultima VI*.

● Don't blush now, but Alice Software have used their (wet) Dream Program System in another naughty nighty production. Expect to meet countless skimpily-clad sex sirens in the FM Towns CD-ROM game *Rance II*. Oh, and before you rush off to the dictionary to find our what the title means, it's simply the name for a type of red marble, often with white or blue grains, found in Belgium. Nothing like the game whatsoever.

entertainment USA

■ Check out the wild 'n' wacky antics of New York's Marshal 'Mayhem' Rosenthal every month in RAZE.

Prepare yourself for a roller coaster ride of fun and frolics. You have entered... The Entertainment Zone. However, you'll find no spooky tunes around here, just pages packed from end to end with the best computer and console releases from across the puddle. These are the fastest moving pages around. So who better to host them than RAZE's Stateside games guru, Marshal M Rosenthal

Okay, we're, off. No time to stop and discuss President Bush's golfing antics or Burger King's world domination; there are games to be covered. Plenty happening in the States this month, and no better time to own a console than right now. So if you haven't got one, or are thinking of upgrading, jump to it!

Games for Nintendo's little 'Boy' just keep getting better. Cosmotank gives you action, strategy and plenty of shoot-'em-up, all wrapped in an overall mission to save mankind.

You command a powerful Tiger A1 super tank, battling myriad alien insect foes over five planets. Each planet features underground caverns which must also be traversed in order to reach the power core that will shut down the world. You view the tank as an overhead 2-D on the planet's surface. Destroying the baddies reveals power-ups like shields and greater firepower, plus the highly useful smart bombs that whack everything on the screen. Once into the entrance you search caverns in first-person 3-D. The radar keeps track of the monsters stalking you, while the sights can soon be lined up to deal with any unexpected obstructions.

From blasting aliens to bopping humans and Heavyweight Championship Boxing. There's a lot of fine touches here making it worthy of note. Taking on opponents like The Champ, or working your way up through the ranks, requires strength and skill. The traditional side view disappears once you get within hitting range, then switches to a front perspective that lets you weave your transparent 'head' around whilst pummelling him with two gloved fists. Duck, dart left and right, go for the body or the head, each blow landed is visually (and painfully) displayed. Make the pug see stars with an uppercut, or slice 'n' dice him with kidney punches. Like the real thing, the ref comes in when needed, and each round is scored by a panel of three judges. Being successful not only lets you watch your opponent leave in utter and miserable defeat, but also gives you points that can be applied to increasing your stamina and abilities for the next 15-round event.

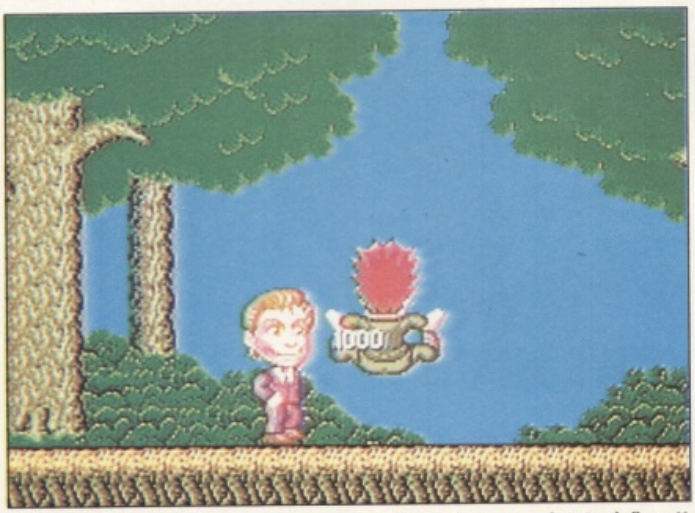
HAVE YOU BEEN INFOCONNED?

The demise of Infocom (to paraphrase Mark Twain) has been greatly exaggerated – they've just moved onto the NES. Tombs & Treasures possesses many of the Infocom trademarks – plus graphics and the ease of ROM play. Finding the lost archaeologist amidst the jungles of Mexico is just the beginning; there's the mystery of the ancient tombs of the Mayan king, Chichen Itza.

Computer roleplaying fans will be on familiar territory here, as the game's totalling icon-driven, complete with Look, Move and Take icons. Push lets you move things about, and there's the fun of Smash as well.

Leaving interiors places your party of three (a guide, boy and girl) in an animated world to move about and explore in. A large cast of characters mix with over 20 puzzles to be solved in a 50-hour-plus game. In keeping with their image, Infocom also include a full-colour map with clues printed on it, and a diary from the missing archaeologist. The whole lot is painless to leave as it comes complete passwords

■ Heads ups! There's no room for wimps in Heavyweight Championship Boxing on the Game Boy.



■ Chan and Chan gets new graphics and a new name for the American market. Say hello to JJ and Jeff.

Narly Nintendo

Exciting stuff continues to be ground out for the Nintendo Entertainment System. NARC gives you everything from the arcade, without the quarter-gobbling (translate to 'penny-pinching'). That means shooting meanies on the streets, taking on hit men in the subway stations – general mayhem everywhere. Should you grab a guy rather than blow his brains out, he registers as a bust and goes flying off to jail. This awards more points than just shooting, but seems too time-consuming considering all the

■ Infocom's first roleplaying adventure on the NES is full of mystery and suspense. Tombs and Treasures is totally icon-driven, giving easy access to all types of player.

bullets speeding in your direction. Perhaps better implemented, though no less violent, is Double Dragon II: The Revenge. The boys return to take on the evil Shadow Warriors, as they weave their way through nine incredible missions, which includes an all-new bonus screen not present in the arcade version. Characters are large and nicely animated – it helps here to NOT have too much happening at once. Plan on memorizing those martial arts moves, because the opposition are plenty tough. But you're tougher – teach the bums a lesson.

Moving to a weirder theme brings us Fester's Quest. Based on one of the characters from The Addams Family television show of the Sixties, our chrome-domed hero must rescue the entire population of the city which has been swallowed up by a flying saucer (Fester, was not considered 'human' and so was passed over).

Not a new theme, and certainly full of the violence one comes to expect in this genre (at least the guys don't blow into bits before your eyes as in NARC). But then again, they deserve death for being the bad guys.

Dropping down a couple of hundred notches in destructivity brings us to the humorous and frustrating JJ and Jeff. Humorous, because this platform/Mario Bros-type game features large characters that run about and do pretty silly things in the pursuit of a kidnapper. The frustration comes from not being able to perform the 'simple' leaps and kicks necessary to destroy objects and advance onto the next level.

Die-hard PC Engine fans will remember the game when it was originally released in Japan under the title Chan and Chan. And no-one could have forgotten the strange quirks of the game and its amazing addictive qualities. As it's only just landed in the States, it's well worth a mention.

Bonk is also a game that's only just reach America, but may have been previously seen in the UK under a different name. The game was originally translated as PC Engine Kid, but Bonk is a much more apt title as all this kid does is go around banging things with his head. Be they animal, vegetable or mineral, this little sucker will bonk 'em. And when the nappie-gnasher gets his chops around the chilli that's lying around, they'll be no stopping him – his head turns red and Bonk becomes ultra-destructive. You can't fail to laugh at the little guy.

WHO YA GONNA CALL?

Six years after the original film came out, Ghostbusters gets converted to the Sega Mega Drive. The game is entirely different from the computer conversions of yesteryear. The remixed game has improved graphics, new platform sections... but still the familiar Ray Parker Jr soundtrack.

■ Don't waste time arresting people, just blow the suckers up! Not only does it save time, it's also much more fun! The NES's NARC is total mayhem.

Love train

The TurboGrafx-16 (known in the UK as PC Engine) is finally getting off its collective butt and licensing other companies to produce for the system. While we wait on this, three NEC-produced games worth playing are Bonk, JJ and Jeff and Bloody Wolf.

In order of violence, Wolf has you saving hostages along the way as you attempt to rescue the President from an army of terrorist guerrillas.

RELEASES IN BRIEF

NEC PC ENGINE

Bloody Wolf – Operation Wolf-style shoot-'em-up. You save hostages in an attempt to rescue the President from an army of terrorist guerrillas.

Bonk – arcade adventure. Previously available in the UK as PC Engine Kid, you control this character who goes around head butting everything. Insane.

JJ and Jeff – platform search and shoot game. Another game that has previously appeared in the UK under a different name. In this instance, Chan and Chan.

NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

NARC – shoot-'em-up. You patrol the streets and must shoot anything that sticks its head in the air. Plenty of action and levels.

Double Dragon: The Revenge – ninja beat-'em-up. The evil Shadow Warriors are there to be defeated again. This time the sprites are huge and beautifully animated.

Fester's Quest – arcade adventure. The game is based on the Addams Family TV show of the Sixties. As the chrome-domed hero it's up to you to save Earth from alien filth.

Tombs & Treasures – Infocom graphical adventure. There's a huge area you must search for, among other things, the lost archaeologist in the jungles of Mexico and the ancient tombs of the Mayan king.

NINTENDO GAME BOY

Cosmotank – strategy action shoot-'em-up. You drive a tiger A1 tank and must battle it out against alien insects. Five worlds and vast underground caverns must be traversed. Power-up pods can be collected for greater fire power and better shields.

Heavyweight Championship Boxing – boxing simulator. You must work your way through the ranks – duffing in dorks – to become the champ. Numerous moves make the game very playable and exciting. And there's always the ref to call on when things get out of hand.

SEGA MEGA DRIVE

Ghostbusters – platform search and shoot game. It's only six years late, but has finally made it. The game is very different from previous versions. Better graphics, improved soundtrack...

BIG IN

Full of excitement, expectation and Eastern promise, Shintaro Kanaoya reveals the latest oriental developments. There's news of a CD-ROM unit for the Sega Mega Drive, a new system card for the PC Engine CD-ROM and the first version of Michael Jackson's Moonwalker

NES

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles – arcade platform pizza-eating game. Full of the green guys and their macho antics. Out in the UK now.
Gremlins II: A New Batch – arcade-action film tie-in. Gizmo makes a splash on the NES and spawns many clones.
Happy Birthday Bugs – arcade action. "What's up, Doc?" "Don't worry, Bugs, it's only old age. You are 50, y'know."
Shadow Brain – shoot-'em-up. Game in a Virtual Reality World based on a cyberpunk scenario.
The Tower of Druaga – arcade adventure. Armed with a laser gun, you must kill the evil goblins and rescue the princess – makes a change...

PC ENGINE

JB Harold Murder Club – CD-ROM mystery adventure. Probably the first Japanese PC Engine adventure to have the option to choose English text.
W Rings – another *R-Type* clone.
Image Fight – multi-directional scrolling action. Shoot-'em-up with loads of weapons.
Galaxy Force II – arcade shoot-'em-up. An Engine version after what seems like many years waiting.
Download II – sequel to *Download*, of course.
Space Fantasy Zone – all the colour of *Fantasy Zone* with the playability of *Space Harrier*.
Final Blaster – vertical shoot-'em-up. Makes *Xenon II* look very dated.
Cobra II – CD-ROM adventure. Scantily-clad women abound in the sequel to the game you couldn't die in.
Alice in Wonderland – action game. Waking up in November.

GAME BOY

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles – pizza attack for hungry people. With the Game Boy's green screen it can't fail!

SUPER FAMICON

Gradius – arcade tie-in. Release to coincide with the SFC's launch on November 26.

Miasoma Yamasho.

A new beginning... Good for the soul. With the imminent release of the Mega Drive in your country I'll be giving equal coverage to both Mega Drive and PC Engine. Plus more news on the Game Boy, FM Towns, etc as they become more popular. I'll also be covering PCs, on which there's some great software in Japan which the rest of the world never sees (mainly due to its 'saucy' nature). Now, without further ado, let's get the show on the road.

This leads me nicely to *Road Busters* on the Mega Drive. The game's a real laugh, with loads of barging and banging in massive trucks. Admittedly a minor release, but a good link from the introduction paragraph, eh?

Actually, the big news with the Mega Drive this month is the much-rumoured CD-ROM unit and its not-so-imminent release. The unit's already been shown to Japanese software developers and the specifications are confirmed. As for the release date, well, Sega aren't saying anything.

The CD-ROM unit settles under the Mega Drive making the whole unit about the same footprint as the PC Engine CD unit, but about three times the height. Like conventional CD players, the peripheral is a front loader. This makes it a sturdier machine than the Engine's CD player and much more fun because you can spend hours fiddling with the open/close button.

The front panel of the unit contains a power switch, open/close button, and forward, reverse, play and stop buttons for the CD. Round the back you'll find a power socket, left and right audio outputs and an RGB video socket. On the righthand side of the machine is an interesting expansion socket. Sega are designing a floppy disk drive to plug in here and there's already a keyboard and modem for the Mega Drive. It seems Sega may have an Amiga-beater on their hands! The CD-ROM will probably have 512K of RAM and may support MIDI. Software support is assured with *Phantasy Star II* and *Mega Anser* all ready for the silver medium.

The price will be around £250, possibly cheaper – around the same price as the Engine's. And that should keep Sega owners happy till Sega bring out the Mega Drive II – although I'm not allowed to reveal any more about the new machine, but Nintendo's Super Famicon better watch out.

■ Exclusive first pictures of Sega's forthcoming CD-ROM drive for the Mega Drive. Watch this space for price and launch details.

SEGA MOONING

Onto Mega Drive games. Wacko Jacko's game-o, *Moonwalker*, based on the deep and profound film where our Mike turns into a car and a robot, is set to walk backwards onto a Mega Drive screen near you soon. The game is based on the arcade game, the one where Jacko turns into a robot when he touches his monkey, and where the smart bomb is a dancing Mike doing lots of whoos and aahs and clutching his genitalia while throwing his hat around. At £35, how could you miss it? It's bad, ahem, as Mike would say.

Kageki is another arcade conversion. I'm sure you've seen it, it's the fighting game where all the characters are caricatures: small and podgy. The game's very cute, in a Japanese sort of way, and scheduled for release in October. It was great fun in the game centres (what we call arcades in Japan). Incidentally Here's an interesting fact for you: games centres are often abbreviated to gay-cens. Imagine the looks Japanese people get when we travel to English-speaking countries and ask for the nearest gay-cens!

As a tie-in with the Iraq crisis here's Dynamite Duke. Your view is that of just behind the character you control and for the most part you shoot people*Operation Wolf* or *Cabal* style. At the end of a level you meet some tough guys and punch

JAPAN

'em to death. Why not use a gun, I hear you ask. Umm... Anyway, it comes out in November.

Finally, on the Mega Drive, there's the arcade conversion of *Crackdown*; a conversion of the PC Engine's *Space Invaders '90*; the tastefully-titled Japanese game *Tora, Tora, Tora*, less said about that the better; Capcom's fabulous *Strider*, and the ubiquitous *Klax*.

Currently number one in the Mega Drive charts is *Thunder Force III*, and well deserved too.

PIZZA EATERS

Now onto the Nintendo. First a word from our sponsors, Konami. "Do you have trouble cutting your pizzas? Find that the salami keeps falling off the topping? Then call the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Already a huge hit in the Nintendo pizza-eating community, the sequel set in America and resembling the arcade game, for all American hot flavour pizza eaters, will follow soon. And for all you portable pizza take-away Game Boy eaters, your TMNT's are already on the scene with the anchovies and Tabasco sauce for £15. Nappy rash? Then get rid of those bad bottom blues with a Super Famicon and the huge arcade hit *Gradius* which will be appearing on the legendary SFC within the year (1990). You need never wear your paper pants again!" Er...

Moving swiftly along we have *Gremlins II: The New Batch*. It's an arcade adventure with you controlling the cute and furry Gizmo. Complete with weapon shop and bonus stages this looks set to be the cuddliest release of the year. Also, there's *Happy Birthday Bugs* to celebrate the birthday of Bugs Bunny (he's 50 you know), and *Shadow Brain*, described as a Virtual World Game, in Japanese for around £80! (Give that one a miss I think.)

Now, where would you go to play a simultaneous 28-player 3-D shoot-'em-up? That's right, the *Japanese National Flowers and Greenery Exhibition*. In 1990, this exciting event's entertainment section is being handled by Namcot, who've created a multi-player *Galaxions*, as well as *The Tower of Druaga*, where you are given a laser gun and have to kill bad guys and rescue the Princess Kai. Why they chose the flower power exhibition to show these two 'games' is as much a mystery to me as it is to you. Certainly beats looking at grass grow.

PC ENGINE MURDER

And so to the PC Engine and *JB Harold Murder Club*, possibly the first Japanese adventure game for English speakers. It's a CD-ROM game, so there are lots of pretty stills and music and a neat option which allows you to choose between Japanese and English text. The beginning of a new trend? Let's hope so.

For all you shoot-'em-up, down, left, right and diagonally fans there are no less than eight – some new, some sequels, some conversions – coming out for the Engine.

W Rings (pronounced "double rings") is the new one, but it's another old horizontal-scrolling, multi-weaponry lark. *Xevious* is a conversion, which is currently number one in the charts; with *Image Fight*, and *Galaxy Force II* and *Download II* the sequels. However, there are a couple of special ones. *Final Blaster*, which comes out at the end of September, and *Space Fantasy Zone*.

Final Blaster is special because it looks damn amazing. Graphics to rival *Xenon II*, special weapons to rival *Xenon II*. All in all, a Nineties version of *Xenon II* – but better. *Space Fantasy Zone* is described as a cross between *Space Harrier* and *Fantasy Zone* – should prove interesting. What next? Strip Ninja Warriors?!

The shrewd people who purchased the fabbo CD-ROM system will soon be able to get ahold of version 2.1 of the system card. The latest version of the CD-ROM unit operating system will cost £15 and is a substantial improvement of the former. It can now handle CD graphics (CD-G) – like those on Fleetwood Mac's Behind the Wall – making the two-year-old unit just as good as Commodore's 'brand-new' CD-TV. Just goes to show how advanced Japanese technology is.

Cobra II, the CD-ROM sequel to the game with scantily-clad ladies and weird aliens, is set for release within the year. *Batman* is coming along very nicely (thank you very much), as is *Alice in Wonderland*, an action game waking up in November.

That's it for this month. Keep smiling, keep laughing, keep buying the magazine. Goodbye, or, as I now say, abayo...

■ **Like the arcade version, Michael Jackson's *Moonwalker* on the Mega Drive features a selection of Wacko's tunes playing in the background.**

MEGA DRIVE

Moonwalker – arcade adventure film tie-in. Wacko's back and sliding onto a screen near you soon.

Road Busters – road-racing game. Features big trucks and large, hairy men with Yorkie bars. Nuff said.

Kageki – arcade conversion. Cute 'n' cuddly game with caricatures as the main sprites.

Super Monaco GP – fabbo race game. Highly-reviewed in both Japanese magazines and RAZE (see page 62).

Dynamite Duke – *Operation Wolf* clone. Tough guy goes biffing and blowing up a range of tough dudes. Viewed from an over-the-shoulder perspective.

Crackdown – arcade conversion. Vertically-scrolling two-player action; already appeared on many other machines.

Space Invaders '90 – complex adventure. Only joking.

Tora, Tora, Tora – flight game. Sick tie-in with the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbour. Well, I suppose *Commando* wasn't very tasteful in Germany come to think of it.

Strider – Capcom arcade conversion. Superb reviews of the computer versions last Christmas. Great graphics and animation.

Klax – puzzle game. Hoping to emulate *Tetris* by appearing on every computer/console format. Not quite as addictive, though.

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WHICH CONSOLE?

No doubt about it, consoles are the major force of 1990. With no fewer than ten cracking consoles currently available and countless others due for imminent release, it's little wonder you're having difficulty deciding what to go for. RAZE looks at the best buys and wonders what the future holds for each of the machines

Ten years ago, game consoles like the Atari VCS were all the rage; several years later home computer set ups like the Sinclair Spectrum and Commodore 64 became the entertainment systems to own; in the last few years the ST and Amiga have been causing a scene. Today consoles have gone full circle and are without doubt the main machines.

It seems all the major hardware manufacturers have joined the fray. Amstrad, Atari, Commodore, NEC, Nintendo and Sega all have one or more game consoles. And, almost monthly, it seems another is announced.

Software support for almost all machines is booming. Numerous factors have enticed software houses into the console market:

■ First, console games – being hardware based – are extremely difficult to copy. Home copying is virtually non-existent. While it's impossible to deter the professional profiteering pirate, casual crackers soon give up if the task is near impossible or prohibitively expensive.

■ Second, the current crop of consoles make 16-bit machines like the ST and Amiga look pathetically inadequate and under-powered. The Atari Lynx, for instance, has virtually identical power to the Amiga yet it can be taken with you wherever you go. Meanwhile, the Sega Mega Drive boasts enough umph to make some arcade machines look sick. Enough said.

■ Finally, consoles cost a fraction of home computer prices. For the price of an Amiga A500 you could get an Amstrad GX4000, Atari VCS 2600, Commodore 64GS, Nintendo Game Boy and Sega Master System! And there'd still be change left over. Even state-of-the-art console technology like the Sega Mega Drive costs half the price of an Amiga.

So consoles have a rosy future, but what do you go for? Is it portable power or arcade quality you're after? Whatever your needs, the RAZE round up starting overleaf will help you make that vital decision...

Availability: most major high street retailers
Dimensions (mm): 255 x 184 x 54
Weight: 600g
Memory: 64K
Processor: 4MHz Z80A
Sound: stereo, three-channel programmable AY-3-8912 sound generator
Maximum onscreen colours: 32
Palette: 4096
Resolution: 160 x 200
Cartridge capacity: 128K
Software: one title, ten-plus in production

AMSTRAD GX4000 ■ £99

While the GX4000 is a very new machine – only being introduced at the beginning of September – its predecessor (the Amstrad CPC home computer) has been around for over five years. The GX4000's architecture is very similar to the CPC's. Indeed, if the GX4000 accepted software on cassette or disk, you'd discover it would run all CPC software. That doesn't mean the GX4000 is simply a CPC without a keyboard – far from it.

The new machine's palette has been increased from the CPC's measly 27 to an ST-beating 4096. Similarly, the number of colours possible onscreen has been doubled from 16 to 32. And such things as hardware sprites, scroll, and split-screen have been implemented.

Amstrad's new console has been put together with the *games* programmer very much in mind.

The GX4000 looks extremely stylish; an astonishing departure from Amstrad's previous efforts. The machine comes with two joypad controllers, a lead for displaying the image on a TV and an Ocean game called *Burnin' Rubber*.

Ports on the front and back of the machine let you plug it into an Amstrad monitor or almost any RGB monitor, and attach a lightpen or lightgun to the console.

Industry pundits reckon the GX4000 is going to be the biggest seller this Christmas – its price, good looks and Amstrad's aggressive marketing will make sure of that.

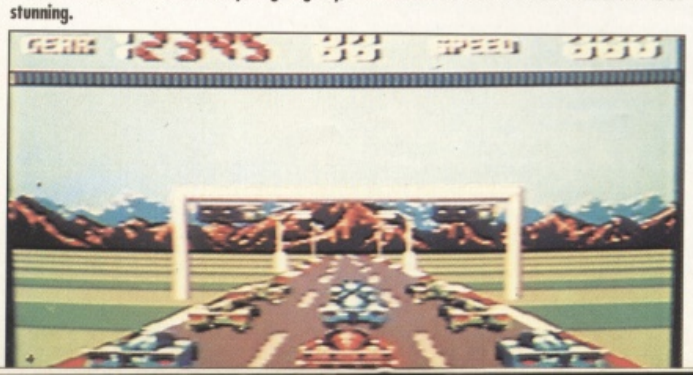
NONPLUSSED

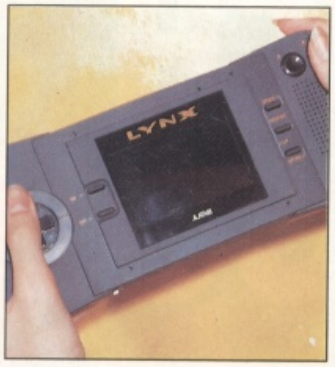
The Amstrad CPC 464 has been superseded by the 464 Plus and the CPC 6128 by the 6128 Plus. These new home computers contain the same hardware as the GX4000 together with a keyboard and cassette deck (464 Plus) or disk drive (6128 Plus). Additionally, the CPC Plus machines contain the same cartridge port as the GX4000.

Software support

Because the GX4000 is so new, there's no software for it. There's an Ocean game called *Burnin' Rubber* supplied with the system, but that is all. Numerous software houses have pledged to support the console, and it's very likely a selection of the CPC's huge back catalogue of games will be converted to cartridge format.

■ If *Burnin' Rubber* above is anything to go by, the standard of future GX4000 releases will be stunning.





Availability: some high street retailers/mail order
Dimensions (mm): 275 x 108 x 38
Weight: 500g
Memory: 64K
Processor: 4MHz 6502
Sound: mono, four-channel custom
Maximum onscreen colours: 16
Palette: 4096
Resolution: 160 x 102
Cartridge capacity: 8Mb
Software: seven titles, ten-plus imminent

ATARI LYNX ■ £179.95

Originally, the Lynx was created by ex-Amiga designers for Epyx. Atari picked up the Lynx after Epyx ran into financial difficulties. So much for the machine's colourful history.

Atari claim the Lynx is the first ever portable console. Not true – the Nintendo Game Boy holds that honour. However, the Lynx can claim to be the first ever colour game console.

Although not pocket-sized, the Lynx sits comfortably in your hands. The machine features a nifty feature which enables the screen to be flipped horizontally thus enabling either left- or right-handed people to use the console with equal comfort.

The three-inch by two-inch colour LCD is fantastically sharp and flicker free. This is possible using clever hardware trickery which results in the frame being drawn from the top and bottom simultaneously – frame flyback occurs in the centre of the screen. Technical lesson over.

Power is supplied via six AA batteries or a power supply. Sadly battery life last less than three hours. You can be guaranteed to put in more than three hours play on the Lynx in a day due to the addictive nature of the games. Using the Lynx as a portable proves expensive which means the Atari console is generally used in cars where a cigarette lighter is available, in front of the TV in case Neighbours is showing or in the office as an executive toy.

Software support

Currently there are only a limited number of games including *Gates of Zendocon*, *Blue Lightning*, *Gauntlet III*, *Chip's Challenge* and *Electrocop*. *California Games* comes bundled with the system. A huge selection is promised over the next six months.

Ironically the Atari Lynx development system comprises an Amiga 2000.

SON OF LYNX

Atari have decided a new version of the Lynx is necessary. With the advent of numerous other low cost, colour hand-held games consoles, the Atari machine will look too bulky and vastly over priced. Atari are hoping to significantly reduce the machine's size to cut production costs and turn the Lynx into a truly portable machine like the Game Boy. Compatibility with the existing machine is assured.

The top three games, in no particular order, are:

Blue Lightning

Afterburner on a small screen. You get to inflict damage on army installations and fighter planes. The smooth scrolling and pulsating action have got to be seen to be believed.

California Games

So what if it comes bundled with the Lynx, it's a damn good game. You participate in four events: BMX bike riding, surfing, skateboarding, and footbagging. Good use of the hardware zoom.

Gauntlet III

Up to six players can participate in this superb maze game. Like the original game, the Lynx version contains countless levels, loads of enemies to defeat and plenty of treasure to pick up.

Availability: certain high street retailers
Dimensions (mm): 266 x 168 x 45
Weight: 700g
Memory: 8K
Processor: 6502
Sound: mono, two channels
Maximum onscreen colours: 16
Palette: 256
Resolution: 320 x 242
Cartridge capacity: 64K
Software: 130 titles (includes 100 VCS 2600 games), several in development

ATARI VCS 7800 ■ £69.95

Quite how such an ancient machine manages to maintain its appeal after such a long time is anyone's guess. The fact is that the VCS was around at the height of console fever around ten years ago.

Atari often quotes a Mintel report that states the 7800, together with its older brother the 2600, accounts for around 50% of the UK console market. Astounding!

When the 7800 was launched, it compared favourably against the competition. Even today it's by no means laughable.

While the 7800's 256-colour palette is relatively impressive, having only 16 colours onscreen is restrictive. Fine for something that will fit into the palm of you hand, but not so hot for something that will appear on a TV.

Sound is a tad on the tired side with only mono two-channel output on offer. Even the Game Boy boasts a three-channel stereo sound chip, and that's not particularly highly regarded.

For its price, though, the VCS 7800 is a bargain.

Software support

Although there are only about 30 titles for the 7800, all 2600 titles will run on the newer machine. This boosts the total number of games available for the 7800 to well over 100. New titles are being developed for the 7800, albeit slowly. Most of the new software comes from the States, but US Gold has produced a few in the past and is contracted to do a few more.

Not counting the numerous classic 2600 games, here are three of the best titles for the 7800:

FIRST IN LINE

The VCS 2600 came before the 7800 – in many ways it's similar to the 7800, but just has less of everything. A 6507 processor, 16-colour palette with a possible four colours onscreen, 192 by 160 screen resolution and one-channel sound make up the bargain box. All 2600 games run on the 7800. The reverse is not true.

Commando

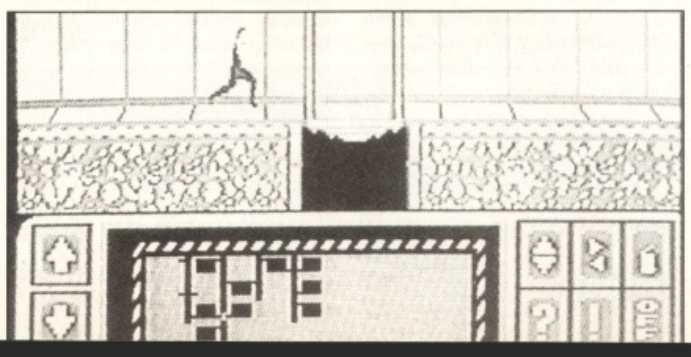
A real oldie, but well worth playing on the 7800. The idea is simply to blast the never-ending hordes of attacking enemy soldiers. There's nothing better for increasing your adrenaline level.

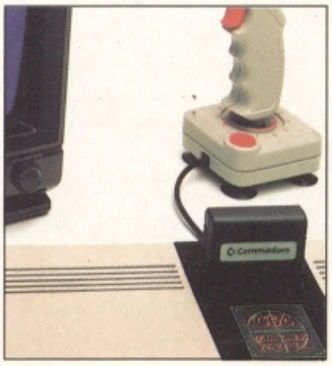
Impossible Mission

A fantastic conversion of a classic Commodore 64 game. Smooth scrolling, colourful graphics, sampled sound – the combination will have you staying a long while.

Tower Toppler

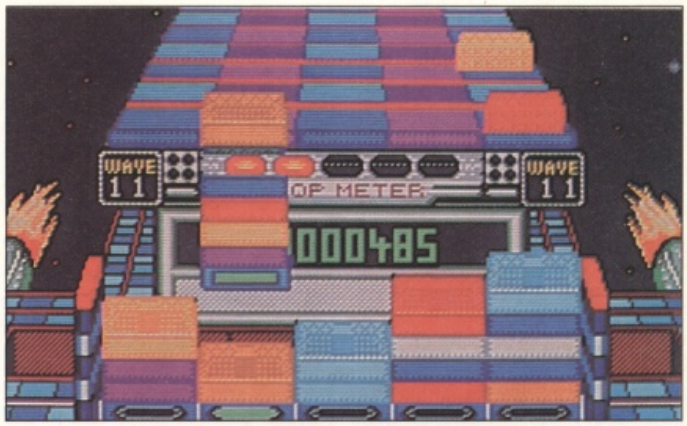
The game involves a frog which, rather than sitting around snogging with princesses, visits towers in his submarine, climbs to the top of them and blows them up. Better known over here as *Nebulus*.





Availability: most high street retailers
Dimensions (mm): n/a
Weight: n/a
Memory: 64K
Processor: 1MHz 6510
Sound: mono, custom three-channel plus white noise
Maximum onscreen colours: 16
Palette: 16
Resolution: ????
Cartridge capacity: ??? (512K)K
Software: one title, 20-plus in development

COMMODORE 64GS ■ £99.99



■ **Domark's Klax and System 3's Flimbo's Quest are a couple of the games that come on the 64GS four-pack cartridge.**

The 64GS is the very latest addition to the crowded console scene – the technology it uses, however, has been around for years. It is, after all, simply a Commodore 64 without a keyboard.

Unlike Amstrad's GX4000 which is based on an earlier Amstrad home computer, the 64GS really is just its predecessor without a keyboard. Cosmetically the new Commodore machine looks much like a Rich Tea biscuit.

The technology inside is dated: a slow processor and a palette of just 16 colours (all of which may be used on screen). The only thing inside the machine which continues to make it stand out is the sound processing hardware. Although only three channels plus noise is available, the slab of silicon in the 64GS is a custom design and far more powerful than the AY-8-3192 and clones used in the ST, Amstrad GX4000 and Sega Master System.

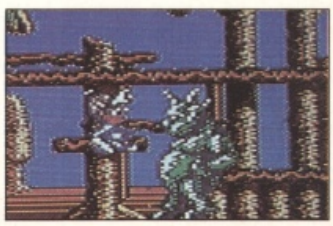
Unlike the C64, the 64GS only accepts cartridge-based software via a slot in the top of the casing. Two standard joysticks can be plugged in and used as controllers.

Apart from a port allowing connection to a TV, there is nothing of great excitement on Commodore's new machine.

Software support

A cartridge is included with the system which contains the games *Klax, Fiendish Freddy's Big Top O' Fun, Flimbo's Quest* and *International Soccer*.

Other than the freebie, no game cartridges are presently available. As the GS is 100% compatible with the huge range of C64 games, it won't be long before there is a flood of old games on cartridge format. Many software houses are keen to adopt the new cartridge format and it's expected that the majority of new C64 software will appear on cartridge (the C64 has a cartridge which is compatible with the GS's).



Availability: grey importers/mail order
Dimensions (mm): 138 x 138 x 36
Weight: 310g
Memory: 64K video plus 8K main
Processor: 7MHz 6502
Sound: stereo, custom six-voice
Maximum onscreen colours: 256
Palette: 512
Resolution: 256 x 216
Cartridge capacity: 1Mb
Software: 200-plus, constant flow of new titles

NEC PC ENGINE ■ £199.95

Despite its miniscule size, the Engine packs a mighty punch. It's arguably the most popular machine in Japan and as such has an enormous software base.

Sadly, manufacturer NEC has no intention of launching the machine officially in the UK. Thankfully, however, there are a number of grey importers offering an excellent service.

There are a number of machines from NEC proclaiming PC Engine compatibility. The machine pictured above is the PC Engine (in the US it's called the TurboGrafx-16). Recently the Japanese brought out the Core Grafx which is identical to the PC Engine apart from the name and colouring – oh, and the joypad features an autofire option. Around the same time, the Shuttle PC Engine was released. This looks very trendy and lacks the CD-ROM adaptor. If you haven't been confused so far... The Super Grafx is the latest addition which boasts an improved graphics chip. PC Engine games will run on it, but Super Grafx games won't run on the Engine.

Although the PC Engine only has an 8-bit processor, it boasts phenomenal custom graphics and sound hardware. Up to 256 colours can be used onscreen which – when combined with the in-built fast scrolling and 64 sprites – can result in some tremendous games. The sound is no sloucher either; six channels of glorious stereo are available.

There's an add-on CD-ROM drive which costs more than the console, but gives you access to a wealth of superb CD-ROM games. The NEC CD-ROM unit is largely attributed to the recent increase in CD-ROM development across various other formats.

IVOR THE ENGINE

As if all the PC Engine variants mentioned above weren't enough, NEC are due to launch a hand-held version called the Turbo Express. Measuring a mere 110 x 185 x 45mm, and weighing 538g, the Express runs PC Engine and Super Grafx software. The screen is a back-lit high resolution active matrix LCD screen. NEC won't be officially launching the machine in the UK, but you can expect to get one via grey importers for around £200.

Software support

An absolutely huge user base in Japan and America ensures a constant flow of arcade quality titles. Software comes on neat credit card-size cartridges and CD-ROM. Around 50 CD-ROM titles exist. An average of three PC Engine games are released every month.
Look no further than this for three off the very best PC Engine games:

GunHed

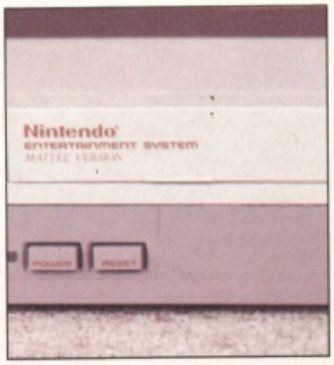
The fastest vertically-scrolling shoot-'em-up outside the arcades. Simply astounding graphics and sound. Power-up pods enable you to create a machine with devastating fire power.

Pac-Land

Cutesy and colourful clone of the classic coin-op game of the same name. You guide a Pac-man through numerous levels, dodging monsters and collecting bonuses.

R-Type

One of the very best versions of this superb arcade game. A horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up comprising varied and often huge enemy craft.



Availability: many high street retailers
Dimensions (mm): 257 x 204 x 86
Weight: 1265g
Memory: 16K
Processor: 4Mhz Z80
Sound: mono, three-voice
Maximum onscreen colours: 16
Palette: 52
Resolution: 256 x 240
Cartridge capacity: ????
Software: 100-plus, constant flow of new titles

NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM ■ £79.95

The Nintendo Entertainment System (NES) is a very old machine which, apart from the Atari VCS, is the most basic console around. This hasn't prevented most Americans eating, breathing and sleeping Nintendo. It's been estimated that almost one in four US households own a Nintendo. UK market penetration is considerably less.

Nintendo's console looks tired and bulky compared to the sleek curves of machines like the Amstrad GX4000, the Sega Mega Drive and the Atari Lynx. The silicon inside isn't particularly impressive either.

Despite the machine's cumbersome design and basic hardware, the Nintendo Entertainment System is the world's largest selling console. This is due mainly to the tremendous playability of many of the games.

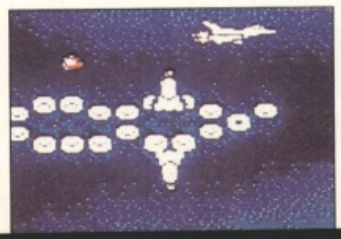
Software support

Around 50 titles exist in the UK; the States has four or five times this number (sadly US cartridges aren't compatible with the UK machine). The UK has to wait almost two years before it gets the latest arcade conversions and film licences. The only benefit this brings is that Nintendo game players over here have an enormous amount of software to look forward to. Approximately three titles are released each month.

Don't miss out on these three games:

Life Force

Better known as *Salamander* in the arcades, the game is a frantic one- or two-player shoot-'em-up. Stunning graphics and classic arcade action make this a sure-fire hit.



NOT ANOTHER NINTENDO

The next Nintendo console, dubbed the Super Famicom, is rumoured to be an extraordinary beast. A palette of 32,768 colours (with 256 colours onscreen) is supposed to accompany a performance-busting sound chip. Contradictory reports have surfaced from developers who say the machine is good, but not as good as the Mega Drive. A price point of £100, which Nintendo seems keen to set, tends to imply tried and tested technology rather than anything new and clever. We wait...

■ **The Super Famicom as it was shown over six months ago. How much will have changed when it's finally released?**

Mega Man

A monumental game in which you must defeat the nefarious Dr Wily. An array of evil characters with silly names like Iceman, Elecman, Gutsman and Fireman must be destroyed beforehand.

Super Mario Bros

The game best known to Nintendo players everywhere, and the biggest selling computer game in the world. Some ten million copies are apparently in circulation.

Availability: certain high street chains
Dimensions (mm): 146 x 88 x 32
Weight: 320g
Memory: 8K
Processor: ???? 6502
Sound: stereo, three channels
Maximum onscreen colours: n/a (black and white only)
Palette: n/a
Resolution: 160 x 144
Cartridge capacity: ?????
Software: 50-plus, numerous new releases

NINTENDO GAME BOY
■ £69.95

It's the Martini of the console world – you can play it any time, any place, anywhere. This is what portable power is all about. The Game Boy is small enough to fit into your pocket, works for over ten hours on standard AA batteries, and has a fantastic selection of choice software.

Imagine a Nintendo Entertainment System controller. Now consider a NES controller with a mini screen above it – that, in a nutshell, is the Game Boy. A brightness button lets you darken the images on the matrix LCD screen. You must always play in daylight or strong synthetic light as the screen isn't back-lit.

Technically, the Game Boy is an embarrassment when placed next to the Lynx. Sporting three-channel sound, a poxy slow processor and monochrome graphics, it is best likened to the ZX81. That said, Game Boy output is available in stereo via a headphone socket.

Like the Lynx, a lead is available which enables two machines to be connected together for simultaneous two-player action. The drawback is that both players require the same cartridge for this to work (expensive).

Software support

With a worldwide user base in excess of 1.5 million, software houses can't do anything but sit up and take notice. Already there are around 50 titles for the Game Boy. With three or four new titles appearing every month, there's little worry of poor software backup. Like the NES, the Game Boy is endowed with some of the most playable titles around.

Three games you shouldn't leave home without follow:

Nemesis

Horizontally-scrolling shoot-'em-up based on the arcade classic of several years back. Superb sounds and smooth parallax scrolling really show off the machine's best qualities.

Tetris

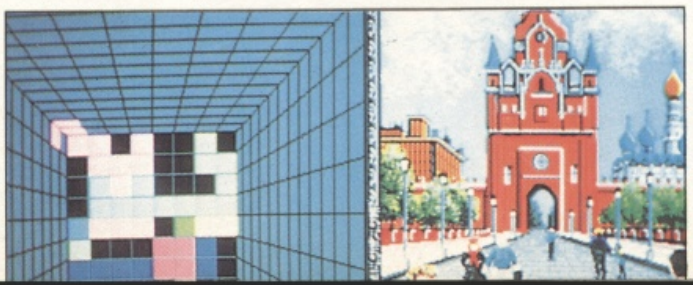
Fantastically simple concept that's taken the world by storm. Slotting various shapes together is horribly addictive. Arguably at its best on the Game Boy – especially in two-player mode.

Super Marioland

Any game featuring Mario has got to be a winner. *Marioland* is no exception. Your aim is to traverse all manner of terrain to rescue Daisy from the clutches of an evil madman.

NOT ANOTHER NINTENDO: 2

Nintendo tend to keep machine development under wraps until they are just about to launch. The Super Famicom is an embarrassing thorn in their cartridge slot. Nintendo haven't confirmed the possibility of a colour hand-held console similar to the Game Boy, but rumour mongers indicates that such technology is in their palms waiting to be unleashed onto a suspecting public.



Availability: various high street retailers
Dimensions (mm): 365 x 170 x 70
Weight: 875g
Memory: 24K
Processor: 4MHz Z80
Sound: mono, three channels
Maximum onscreen colours: 16
Palette: 64
Resolution: 256 x 192
Cartridge capacity: 512K
Software: 80-plus, numerous new releases every month

SEGA MASTER SYSTEM
■ £79.99
£99.99 (LIGHT GUN) £129.99 (GUN 'N' GLASSES)

The box is big, but then fresh air is free. That doesn't imply the Sega is no good. On the contrary – while the machine is based around existing 8-bit computer technology, the key to the Master System's success is its custom audio and video hardware.

Although only 16 colours can be displayed onscreen and the resolution is a comparatively poor 256 by 192 pixels, the custom graphics chip contains enough power to scroll the screen and move several sprites around the screen with very little processor intervention. The result is games which look a lot better than Nintendo offerings.

Software is available in either cartridge or smart card format. The smart cards – very similar to the PC Engine cards – are slowly being phased out. The reason, it seems, is that the cards aren't designed to take the punishment games players often dish out.

Software support

In the land of the consoles (Japan), the Sega doesn't walk as tall as the Nintendo in the software stakes. However, Virgin have done a superb job marketing the machine over here which means there's a large user base hungry for software. Consequently, more Sega software reaches our shores compared to Nintendo software. Now that UK software companies have got in on the development act, there should be an absolute wealth of coin-op conversions, film licences and original titles in the near future. Currently there are three to four new releases a month.

Wonderboy III

This is not a direct conversion of the arcade game of the same name. Instead it's adventure orientated like its predecessors. Great depth and playability.

R-Type

A scrolling shoot-'em-up with dazzling graphics, frantic gameplay and huge animated sprites. An excellent coin-op conversion.

Ultima IV

Like the home computer versions, this game is a classic. A huge play area, dungeons, dragons, brave knights, damsels in distress – an adventurer's dream.

SEGA GET IN GEAR

Even Sega are jumping on the hand-held bandwagon. They have a machine called the Game Gear due for release shortly boasting a 3.2-inch colour LCD screen, a palette of 4096 colours, 32 colours onscreen, a Z80 clocked at 4Mhz and stereo sound. Like NEC's Turbo Express, a colour TV tuner can be added to the system for a few pennies more. The Game Gear will not run Sega Master System games as first thought. In Japan the machine will retail for around £100. Virgin have no plans at present to introduce the hand-held into this country.

■ What's this? Another new Sega machine? No, it's just the restyled Master System. The machine is currently available in the States, but isn't due for release in this country until later next year. Apparently it'll be cheaper than the existing Sega MS.

Availability: certain high street chains
Dimensions (mm): 280 x 212 x 65
Weight: 800g
Memory: 74K main plus 64K video
Processor: 8MHz 68000, plus 4MHz Z80 for downward compatibility
Sound: stereo, 12-voice custom FM chip
Maximum onscreen colours: 64
Palette: 512
Resolution: 320 x 224
Cartridge capacity: ????????
Software: 30-plus, many in development

SEGA MEGA DRIVE ■ £189.95

There's no mistaking that this beast is the most desirable of all the non-portable consoles. It's new, it's powerful and the software that has so far appeared for it is leaps and bounds ahead of anything else on any other machine.

Inside there is an impressive array of custom sound and graphics hardware together with two powerful mainstream processors. The Mega Drive's main processor is the 16-bit 8MHz 68000 – the very same processor in the ST and Amiga.

An 8-bit Z80 processor also lurks inside. This isn't actually used when the machine is in native Mega Drive mode. Instead becomes active when the machine emulates an 8-bit Master System. Yes, you guessed, the Mega Drive runs Master System software. A £30 adaptor is required before such a feat is possible, but otherwise there is no fuss.

On its own, the 68000 in the Mega Drive is adequate, but nothing breathtaking. It's the 12-channels of stereo sound, high resolution and 80-odd sprites that can be planted on the screen that are the result of the custom chips that make the machine fly. In short, the machine makes the ST and Amiga look sick.

Unless the much rumoured Super Famicom turns out to be extraordinarily revolutionary, the Mega Drive is the machine to watch. Already the software for it is far superior to anything else. Just imagine what will be possible in six months time...

Software support

It's had a slow start, but now titles are appearing at the rate of two to three a month. Almost every game is an absolute stunner. The graphics and sound are very close to arcade quality and developers have discovered it's a joy to program. Many UK developers are getting in on the act, so you could soon see a wealth of home computer conversions.

With such an excellent choice available, almost any three games you pick will be good. However, these are the three that stand out the most:

Golden Axe

Wander across an enormous turtle and take a flight on a giant eagle as you attempt to give Death Adder the chop. Superb audio visuals and incredible gameplay. Get it.

Thunderforce III

As shoot-'em-ups go you can't get much better than this. The amount of data being hurled around the screen is phenomenal. This game would do well in the arcades.

Super Shinobi

The ultimate in ninja beat-'em-ups. Fast, furious and terrifyingly addictive. Forget previous home computer releases and even the arcade version – the Mega Drive version really is astounding.

ROM AND ROLL

It has just been announced by Sega in Japan that a CD-ROM unit will be available for the Mega Drive either late this year or early next year. No price details yet, but you can expect to pay upwards of £250. (See Big in Japan on page 20 for further details.) The CD-ROM unit is just one of numerous add-ons soon to become available. A keyboard, disk drive, graphics tablet and modem are just around the corner. With all the extras coming, the Mega Drive could turn into an Amiga-beating home computer.

THERE'S A NEW BOY IN TOWN

- You've read the reviews, you've longed to get your hands on one, and now at last the *Game Boy* has arrived.
- The pocket sized games machine measures just 148 x 88 x 31mm. It's the portable powerhouse you can take anywhere.
- The *Game Boy* runs on four AA batteries and comes with a free copy of Tetris and stereo earphones.

Only £69.99

CAN YOU AFFORD TO MISS OUT ON THE ACTION?

Please make cheques payable to The Words Works Ltd.
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RAZE

REVIEWS

Consoles

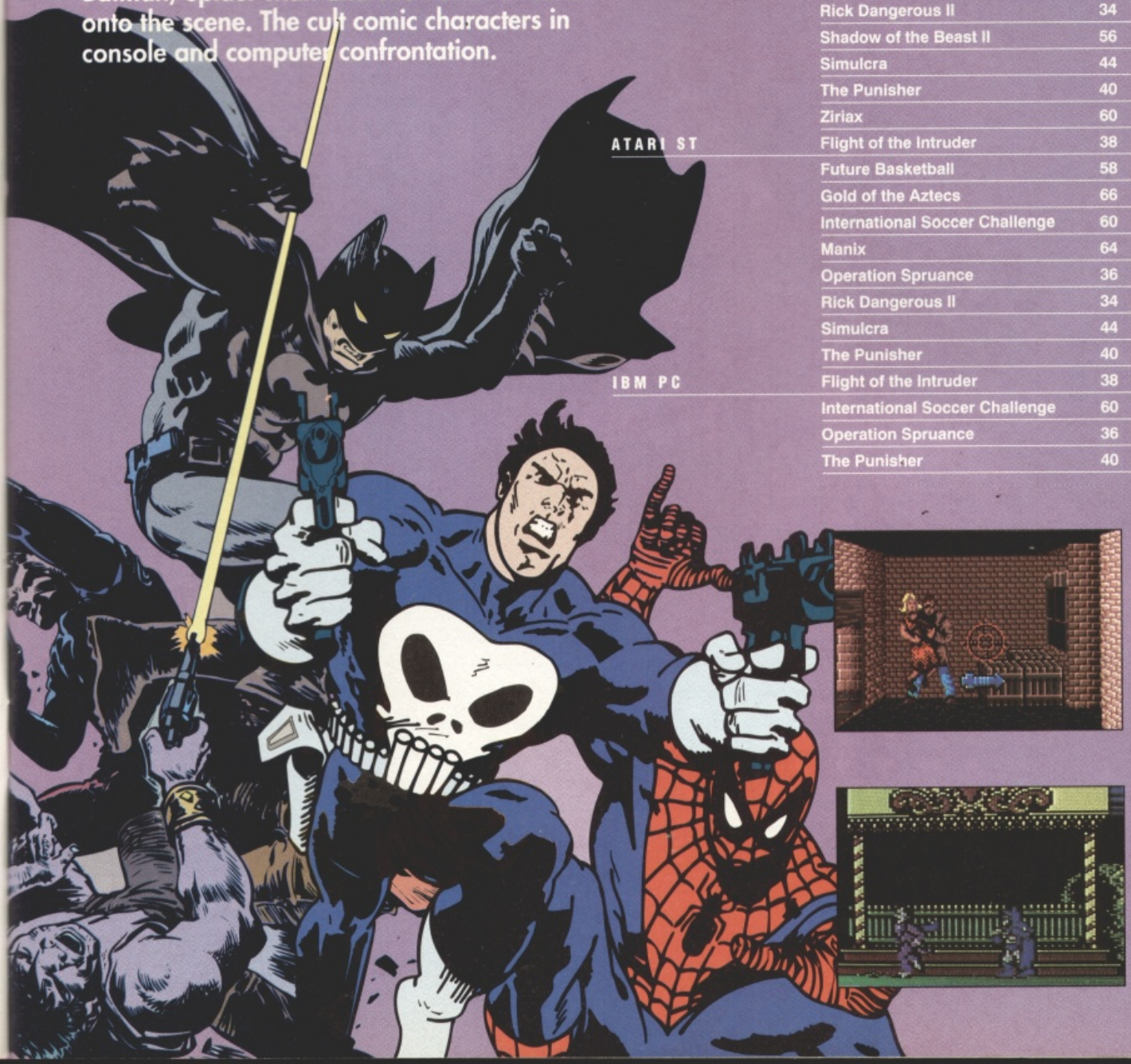
ATARI LYNX	Slimeworld	42
GAME BOY	Paperboy	67
	The Amazing Spider-Man	67
MASTER SYSTEM	Super Monaco GP	62
MEGA DRIVE	Batman	41
	Super Monaco GP	62
NES	Batman	41
PC ENGINE	Devil Crash	32
	Hell Explorer	64

16-Bit

AMIGA	Flight of the Intruder	38
	Future Basketball	58
	Gold of the Aztecs	66
	International Soccer Challenge	60
	Manix	64
	Operation Spruance	36
	Rick Dangerous II	34
	Shadow of the Beast II	56
	Simulcra	44
	The Punisher	40
	Ziriax	60
ATARI ST	Flight of the Intruder	38
	Future Basketball	58
	Gold of the Aztecs	66
	International Soccer Challenge	60
	Manix	64
	Operation Spruance	36
	Rick Dangerous II	34
	Simulcra	44
	The Punisher	40
IBM PC	Flight of the Intruder	38
	International Soccer Challenge	60
	Operation Spruance	36
	The Punisher	40

SUPERHERO SHOWDOWN

Batman, Spider-Man and The Punisher burst onto the scene. The cult comic characters in console and computer confrontation.



Find out its limits.
Look in the mirror.

Introducing the powerful new Atari 1040 STE. With such an awesome machine, we're convinced the only limits you'll come across are your own.

Based on the incredibly successful 1040 STFM, the 1040 STE itself goes beyond the limits of its predecessor.

The 'E', by the way, stands for 'Enhanced'. But once you've discovered its amazing array of features, you may consider 'Enhanced' to be the understatement of the decade.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the 1040 STE is its graphics. Its palette contains over 4000 colours (all right, 4096 to be exact).

To ensure precise and realistic images, the STE features 'hardware scrolling', enabling smooth scrolling in any direction and split-screen effects. And, with the SM124 monitor, you'll get razor sharp black-out-of-white text that's as clear as the type on this page.

To complete the picture, it is able to 'phase-lock' its video output to an external video source, permitting direct linking to a Genlocking device.

The 1040 won't just have your eyes swivelling in their sockets. Your eardrums will also take a pounding from the 8-bit PCM stereo sound.

The new PCM (Pulse Coded Modulation) sound system's two chips allow the 1040 STE to replay high-quality sampled sounds, in stereo, without burdening the CPU. Or, for even more of an earblasting, just add a couple of RCA output jacks and power the sounds through your own stereo.

Of course we mustn't forget memory. One megabyte of RAM comes as standard. If that's not enough, the 1040 STE provides four SIMM sockets. Simply plug in some SIMM (Single In-line Memory Module) boards and boost the RAM up to four megabytes.

To help you handle all this technology, we've added even more: a Blitter chip, capable of shifting data at high speeds independent of the CPU, and a new version of TOS.

The TOS 1.6 (operating system) has an enhanced file selector with drive-change buttons, improved desktop with file move, MS-DOS compatible disk formatting, and better application installation and auto-booting facilities.

As you'd expect, there's a huge range of peripherals including hard disks, floppy disks, laser printers, colour monitors and even Megafile 44, Atari's unique 44-megabyte removable hard disk.

As well as all this hardware, there are hundreds of software programmes for the 1040 STE - we're even throwing in the ST-Series Productivity and Leisure bundles free.

The Productivity bundle features a database, spreadsheet, word processor and business graphics package, and there's S.T.A.C., FirST BASIC, Hyperpaint and Prince in the Leisure bundle.

If you're itching to get your hands on the controls, there are two 15-pin analogue controller ports (which accept paddles, light-guns and light-pens) and a 9 pin mouse port and joystick port.

With adaptors, up to six people can use the 1040 at one time. Just in case it's too much for one person to handle.

At £499.99 it certainly won't be too much for one person to afford.

The ideal computer at the ideal-price, you may think. We think so, too. But there remains only one potential problem: not whether you'll make impossible demands of the 1040, but whether the 1040 will make impossible demands of you.

Please send me further details of the 1040 STE and other Atari products.

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ATARI 1040STE

WITHOUT IT YOU'RE JUST PLAYING GAMES

RAVE

DEVIL CRASH

NAXAT SOFT ■ PINBALL SIMULATION

Pinball wizard or steel-balled satanist? Julian Boardman mans the flippers and dives off the deep end

Two years ago, a game appeared on the PC Engine that was to send the pinball-playing world into a frenzy. The game was *Alien Crush*, and its content was like nothing every seen before on a home computer. Unlike conventional pinball simulators that had gone before it, *Alien Crush*'s play area was split into two sections – the pinball table was, effectively, the size of two screens. It was not just the play area that caught the attention, the graphics, too, were out of the ordinary. The sides, backgrounds and characters that inhabited he area were all graphically inspired by HR Geiger, special effects designer of the film Alien.

After *Alien Crush*'s undoubted success, a sequel was no surprise. What the designers of *Devil Crash* have done is create a whole new game environment, improved the content and changed the table from flick-screen to scrolling.

The new pinball table is one of the most sophisticated you'll find. The table is now three screens in length, each with its own set of flippers. When the ball leaves its present screen area, the table scrolls accordingly. The whole area is filled with satanic symbols and demonic depictions giving the game very dark overtones. From the sides of the table large heads open and close their mouths, ready to eat your ball if it's flicked in their direction.

To begin with, you'll be happy just stopping the ball going between the flippers, but after a while you'll want to reach the places other players haven't reached.

As with most pinball games, it's best to keep the ball up at the top of the table. More so with *Devil Crash* as that's where all the bonus points are to be had. You'll only get to the top by doing a super flip; keeping the fire button held down after you've hit the ball.

Right at the top you'll find what can only be described as an altar (complete with pentacle). Circling the altar are eight hooded druids with glowing faces. Beneath their feet are eight Roman numerals, each one glowing in turn like a cabbalistic wheel of fortune until the doorway to the bonus screen is chosen.

In all there are 12 bonus screens, six disparate designs, with a random choice between one or two sets of flippers. Although this is not the only way to access these screens it is often the simplest and most lucrative.

Sooner or later you'll let the ball slip past the top two sets of flippers and end up fighting for survival in the lower third of the screen. It is here that your number

■ Getting the ball through the castle blocks off the bottom exit.

■ You've done it! The bottom level has been blocked off – you're safe.

TILT TIPS

★ Pass the ball through the gatehouse and your bottom flippers will be almost impassable.

★ If three spinning pentacles appear at the bottom of the table, pass the ball over them; this will give you a free ride to the altar at the top with the flippers defended by three balls.

★ If you hit one of these balls with your main ball, it will change to one of three colours. If the three balls at the top are all red, you will receive a free ball.

★ Whenever a green arrow points at an opening, aim for it. It will invariably lead to one of the 12 bonus screens, which can net you up to 12 million points. If you go into an alien's open mouth, you'll cash in your bonus points – preventing anyone else getting them.

TABLE TOPS

607,736,100 Julian '*$&!' Boardman

53,543,400 Richard Mint-Aero

38,264,800 Derek Chapman

29,453,200 Les Ellis

OCCULT ODDITIES

● The pentacle used in *Devil Crash* is an ancient symbol for protection, dating back further than the crucifix.

● Despite popular thinking, druids have nothing to do with Stonehenge which was built 400 years before their existence.

● Wiltshire, the home of RAZE, has one of the highest concentrations of ancient symbols and sites in the country. Les is one of them.

■ A bonus stage. Destroying everything above will boost your score immensely.

one priority lies. The gap between your bottom pair of flippers can be filled by a castle if you can get the ball through a gatehouse situated above the gap. The little castle is the most important thing in the game. This could save you from possession, exorcism, or just the end of a game.

The knack is to amass as many bonus points as possible. To do this, you need to hit the two dragon heads that are situated above the flippers until they blow up, sending eight or more red creatures swarming across the table. Once you've blown these guys up, you can access other bonuses hidden around the table. When you do finally lose your ball, the bonus is added to your score – or, mysteriously, sometimes the second player's (hey, give me a break, the instructions were in Japanese). In fact, I played this game for six hours solid one night, and I still can't work out the bonus system.

Devil Crash is far superior to *Alien Crash*, with more gameplay and a greater sense of involvement. It's the sheer unpredictability that makes the game more addictive. For instance, I received a 600,000,000 bonus for doing something special, and I haven't been able to do it since – which makes me either the jammiest person in Trowbridge, or the greatest pinball player in the world. I know which one I prefer.

RATINGS

PC ENGINE

93%

OUT NOW

£29.95

Not being hampered by the flick-screen scrolling of *Alien Crush* is a major plus. The graphics are amazingly detailed – monsters, knights, birds – with pixel perfect accuracy. The ball actually shines as the aliens' eyes follow it around the table. The tune which plays eerily in the background is superb, and along with the great sound effects, makes for an involving atmosphere

■ Eight warlocks at the top of the screen play magical chairs in a circle. They change colours, and point bonus for being destroyed, as they move. Killing them all results in another eight.

Chute into which your ball falls and then gets shot out from.

Knock the ball into this chap for 5000 points. If an arrow points up towards the skull, your ball will be trapped and you'll be taken to a bonus screen.

Knights guarding exit to top level. They take several hits to die and usually speed up the ball when hit.

Druids take several hits to be destroyed. Kill all eight and another eight will appear ad infinitum.

Bonus balls. If the three balls turn red you gain an extra life.

Traps your ball, and if the circumstances are correct, takes you to a bonus level.

The only way is down. By getting the ball through the castle above, this area will be sealed. Grabs ball and then jettisons it or takes you to a bonus level.

Grabber which captures your ball and then ejects it or transports you to a bonus screen.

Hit the six eggs below and this cute character will open its mouth. Get the ball into its mouth for a bonus.

One of the bumpers which gets progressively redder with every hit until it bursts into loads of bonus aliens.

RAZE

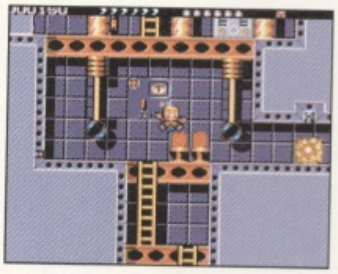
RICK DANGERO

MICROPROSE ■ ACTION ADVENTURE

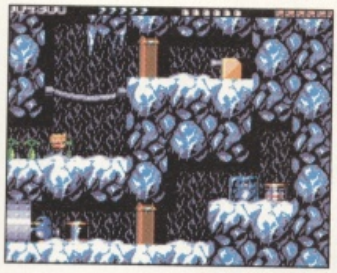
Stripping off his Fedora, bass guitar and mac, Julian Boardman enters the fray...

If you've ever seen the final screens of the first *Rick Dangerous* adventure, then you'll have no problem continuing your adventure in the sequel. However, if like most of us mere mortals, those final screens alluded you, you'll be in more trouble now than you were ten months ago! The aliens that appeared on the final screen of the first game are the self-same troup of bug-eyed baddies who have miraculously resurfaced in Hyde Park – yes, the middle of London!

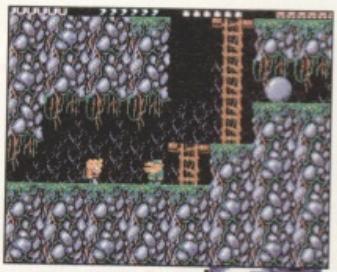
This is no ordinary invasion, and a special type of character is needed for the job. Of course, no-one can find Superman or Batman, so they have to make do with Rick Dangerous – who does get into the spirit of things by dressing up as Flash Gordon. Being such a clever Dick, our hero goes straight for the jugular and enters the alien spacecraft, a labyrinthian structure of epic proportions. After taking control of the ship, you progress through four other levels on three different worlds, until you finally confront Fat Man, the



■ Rick's adventures start at Hyde Park on Earth.

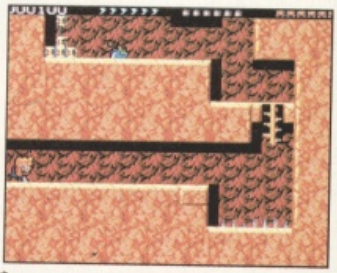


■ From there he moves to the Ice Caverns of Freezia.



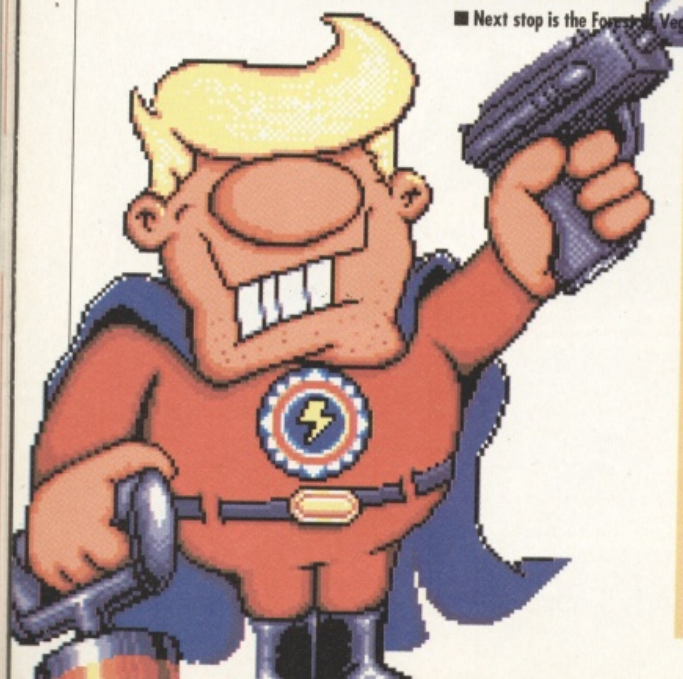
■ Next stop is the Forest of Vegetable

■ Then the Atomic Mud Mines.



■ And finally an encounter at the Fat Guy's Headquarters.

■ *Rick Dangerous II* is one of Core Design's last titles for Microprose since they decided to publish their own games earlier this year. The humour and playability that became Core's trademark after *Rick I* has been kept in for *Rick II*.



RICK'S STAMPING GROUND

RAZE invited Rick Dangerous to talk on his favourite hobby, stamp collecting.

"If you've ever contemplated joining the ranks of the superheroes like myself, stamp collecting is a worthwhile hobby to take up. It keeps you off the streets, improves you powers of observation no end, and makes you a better self manipulator. Here's a few facts that you may not know:"

- **The first postal service in the world was run by the Chinese way back in 4,000 BC.**
- **Greenland postmarks are exceedingly rare and expensive as their postal service is normally free.**
- **Sir Winston Churchill had 287 stamps issued by a total of 73 countries to mourn his death in 1965 (JFK only had 183 – amateur!).**
- **The Vietnamese had an anti-American stamp which depicted a US helicopter under heavy fire.**
- **The most expensive stamp ever issued came from New Guinea in 1972 to commemorate John F Kennedy visiting Peking (?). Its face value was 1,200 francs and was printed on 22 carat gold with inset rubies.**

US II

Flick the switch to summon the lift

Forget the bonus bombs; you'll only get stuck

Look out for the snow dripping from the cube above

Bomb the ice cube quick or you'll be sorry

You've got to be nimble to jump past the snowballs fired from the machine

Hey! Where'd Rick get the scooter? Not telling...

Jump up and slightly to the left to avoid the snowball

evil nemesis behind the alien invasion.

That potted scenario of this complex and devious piece of software can't even begin to hint at the stunning difficulty of each of the five levels. There are, perhaps, ten or more puzzle-laden, extremely risky rooms on each stage of the quest; all of which have carefully disguised traps and pitfalls, any of which can waylay (ie maul) the unwary traveller.

Of the five stages, four can be accessed directly from the main menu – a pleasant change from *Rick I*, where you had to play through all the levels in order. By practising each level you can hone your assault ready for the final stage, 'The Citadel of the Aliens', which can only be entered after successful completion of the previous four levels.

Being such an experienced adventurer, Rick has brought some bombs along to ease his quest. There are two types, and both are limited. Moving the joystick down will drop a bomb, while pressing fire and left or right will send out a slider – useful for long range attacks. Rick also has a limited supply of lightning bolts – for lightning attacks, presumably.

On your trek, you'll encounter bonus rooms which contain barrels. Picking up the barrels with replenish one of your attributes; like more bombs or extra lightning bolts. But tread carefully as some of the barrels may be booby-trapped.

It is the sheer volume of challenge and entertainment in this game that makes it an absolute corker.

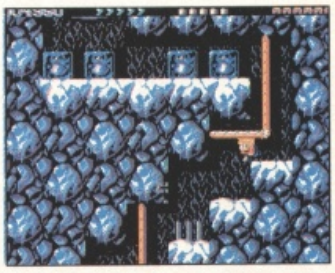
Leads nowhere – don't bother with it

Stand on the steps and wait for the penguin to thaw

Watch out for the icicle

Activate the switch to lower the lift. Take care with the ice spike by the grey pole

Pick up this object for a bonus 500 points



RATINGS

AMIGA 90%

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The characters, objects and background are all beautifully detailed, the grimaces on the faces of the Ice Planet's vikings are brilliant. Watch out for the way all characters, including Rick, get thrown out of the screen with their arms flapping in despair when they die.

ATARI ST 91%

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The gameplay is superb, involving and addictive. Animation is smooth and detailed. The sound consists of a heart-pounding tune and the same crazy effects that made *Rick I* so humorous.

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FLIGHT OF THE INTRU

SPECTRUM HOLOBYTE/MIRRORSOFT ■ FLIGHT SIMULATION

After battling for food in the local Tesco, Paul Rigby reckoned he was just about ready for a spot of MiG fighting...

A modern jet warplane is a strange, challenging machine, and its cockpit is much different from the places that most of us are familiar with. It's a flying Grand Prix racer, world class superbike and video game, all in one."

Thanks, Steve. Here, have a coffee and a Penguin. Stephen Coonts there, folks, author of best-selling book Flight of the Intruder. Which just happens to be the name of Mirrorsoft's latest 'Nam blockbuster (as well as the film, the T-shirt, the breakfast cereal...).

Intruder supports the Grumman A-6 Intruder and McDonnell Douglas F-4B/J Phantom flight models. It is set in the heated skies of Vietnam, just before the Linebacker campaign of 1972 that took place over North Vietnam.

■ **Nothing better than a game of Monopoly to pass the time**

One flight (of two aircraft) may be assigned the bombing run, another flight may be anti-SAM, another anti-AAA, escort, etc. Getting one aircraft safely home is bad enough but juggling eight aircraft in the SAM/MiG/AAA-filled skies of North Vietnam is a recipe for a tidy migraine.

The program is divided into three distinct sections. The first area, *Scramble*, gives you a repeat of the previous mission; this is handy if you've just cocked up a mission but don't want to redefine the configuration of your aircraft.

The next area is split into two and forms the basis of most people's first look at the game mechanics. Called *Phantom...* and *Intruder Pilot Brief* you get to fly your first mission along with a hand-holding tutorial chapter in the 160-page manual.

However, the main section of *Intruder* is the *Commander Air Group* (*CAG*) option. On selection of this option you become the CAG who must choose a primary mission, which can be anything from attacking the dreaded Than Hoi bridge to hitting torpedo boats. Then you select your secondary mission, which you can pick from around six or seven sites around the main target. From this screen you designate the weapons for each flight and investigate basic intelligence for any area on the game map of Vietnam.

You can also change the crews of each aircraft. This is an excellent feature which forces you into making man management decisions – an essential responsibility of all CAGs. So you will have to make sure each

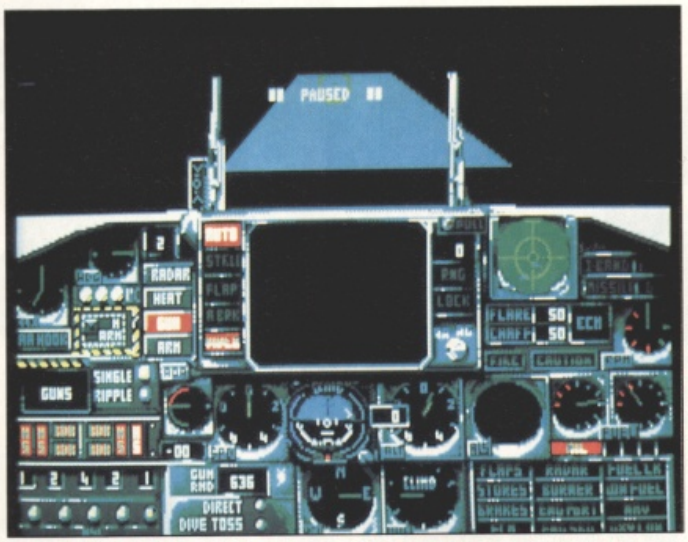
HARDWARE CONNECTION

You may have already seen reviews of Flight of the Intruder in 'computer' magazines. These reviews were all based upon a demo of version 1.0 of the game – which just happened to be bugged to high heaven. Strange how all the reviews gave 90+ ratings then. Hmmm.

The variant reviewed here is the production version, 1.1. There are lots of enhancements over 1.0. Some of the major ones include a once-only configuration; more game sounds via the PC speaker and the supported AdLib soundcard; and support for the MAXX yoke, with integral throttle (£79.50) and MAXX pedals (£49.95) – which controls the rudder – and the Gravis stick (£48.30), which is a fighter-type control stick that includes three configurable buttons giving HOTAS (Hands On Throttle and Stick) possibilities. All the hardware is distributed by Virtual Reality – RC Simulations, Beehive Trading Estate, St George, Bristol BS5 8AY. Tel: (0272) 550900.

I've tested all products with Intruder and they enhance the gameplay no end. Buy them if you can afford the rather high prices, they're well worth the investment.

UDER



■ Complete familiarity if similar to our editor you're used to driving a Skoda Rapide

crew is up to the job assigned to them as they each have individual stats, including ratings for Wild Weasel (anti-SAM), fatigue factor, dog-fighting, etc. Make sure you take care of your men, though, because if you lose any, you'll be given 'green' recruits as replacements.

Once everybody's up and running you can easily switch between aircraft and take control. You can do this at any time so that you'll always be in the thick of the action. In fact, you will need to do this if you wish to take the credit and the points for an operation. Gain enough points and you'll get an operations badge for that strike. Medals are also possible if you've done enough to earn one. The difficulty factor increases the higher the rank you choose.

The flight models have been well implemented. The F-4 Phantom feels like a combat fighter. It produces and retains 'energy' or speed more successfully than the Intruder which can, at times, feel like a flying whale. Subsequently, it is easier to stall the Intruder. Joystick response is accurate as it is easy to spend all of your time over-compensating if you're too heavy handed. The avionics fitted in both aircraft have been well integrated. The Intruder's DIANE bombing/navigation system has been cleverly programmed to give the 'highway' in the sky.

Landing, which is done on a moving carrier deck, is very realistic. Not only do you have an angle of attack reading, but the carrier provides its own 'meatball' guidance system which is visible from your cockpit. Once you've set down on deck, you'll be rated on your landing.

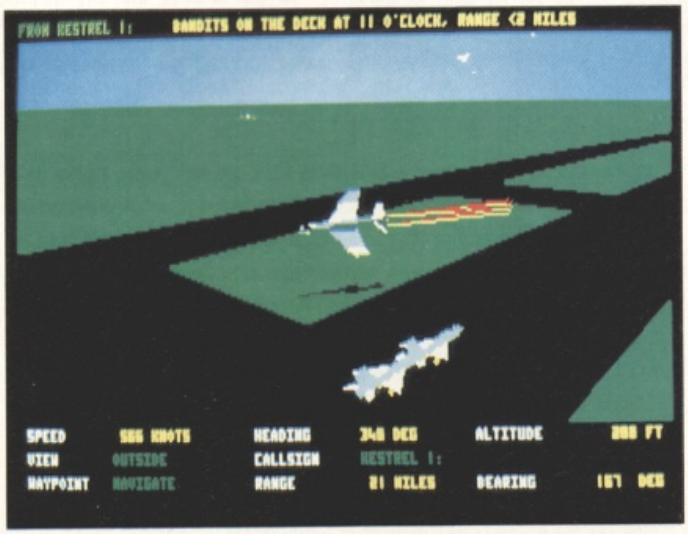
Overall, *Flight of the Intruder* is a tour de force in simulation programming. The program shows that care and attention has been applied to the project. The 3-D graphics have been well programmed, especially considering the amount of info onscreen at once. For the moment at least, *Flight of the Intruder* is the king of the skies.

FLYING FACTS

- **Pilots love nicknames for their planes – gives them a sense of belonging. The Intruder's nicknames were the 'Tadpole' and 'Frying Pan'.**
- **The first Intruder mission was completed south of Hanoi by the Green Pawns training squadron. The first operational squadron were the Black Falcons.**
- **The effectiveness of the diminutive Intruder can be gauged by Radio Hanoi's (the Vietnam propaganda radio station) broadcast after the first Intruder mission. They accused the USAF of using the much larger B-52 strategic bombers against the population centres of the country!**

TIE ME UP, TIE ME DOWN, TIE ME IN

Based on the book of the same name, written by Stephen Coonts, Flight of the Intruder (the film) should be a Christmas release. It tells the tale of an Intruder pilot who grows tired and frustrated at the restrictions imposed on him and his fellow pilots by the US politicians and takes 'positive' action of his own.



RATINGS

AMIGA 95%

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Sound is convincingly pushed out of the PC speaker plus there's good support for the AdLib soundcard. Graphics are luxurious for a PC flight sim, especially in glorious VGA. Of course, due to the polygon structure of the game, those with slower machines will suffer, but the detail and content of the game still remains.

PREVIEW

AMIGA & ATARI ST PREVIEW 11/90

Good news! Both the Amiga and ST versions of *Flight of the Intruder* should be with you before Christmas. I asked Rowan's Rod Hyde about the details: "They'll both look very much like the PC VGA versions as we are using the same artwork. They'll sound a bit better than the PC with AdLib. On the Amiga, we've found that we can set up the game's polygons faster than we can set up the Amiga's blitter to do it by itself. Although we do use the Amiga's blitter for some of the sprite work. Sound is richer on the Amiga than the ST. Although the ST version of *Intruder* is marginally faster."

THE PUNISHER: CIRCLE OF BLOOD

Light Armour Pulse Gun
Length.....140mm
Weight.....3.7Kg
Calibre.....22.2mm
C-Rate.....2rpm

Julian Boardman – The Punisher, a man set on bringing his own brand of justice to those who think themselves above the law, hopes his Aria bass can do the job...

Loosely based on the Marvel comic of the same name, *The Punisher* is a departure from the usual fare from The Edge. Remember, these are the same people who brought you the comic conversions of *Garfield... The Punisher* is perhaps a sign of things to come. The next comic to be put on computer by The Edge is *X-Men*.

The Punisher – known to his friends as Julian... erm, Frank Castle – is a real dark hero of the comic world, the sort of guy who's cool enough to be... err, the Punisher. In fact, he loves nothing more than helping out his local community by ridding it of the bad element. Most of these evil guys bare a startling resemblance to Mr P himself – after all, they all go around killing everyone!

PUNISHING POSITIONS

★ Don't be fooled by the tramps: the ones lying down always carry weapons. However, the ones who stand up and move are totally innocent; don't shoot them.

★ The crooks who move around in front of you can only be shot in the head.

★ On the final screen of the first stage, chuck a grenade at the guy in the white T-shirt when he's a third of the screen in.

★ If a gun magazine is running low, get rid of the bullets before the end of the screen so you can reload at the very beginning of the next.

★ Be swift and accurate.

The toughest and hardest of the local gangs are The Trust who, under the command of Alaric, are very dirty pieces of work. But you've got a few dirty pieces of work of your own. Take the Uzi sub-machine gun; with 13 magazines you could do some damage. Come to think of it, the eight-shot revolver, with 40 rounds, and the seven M68 fragmentation grenades could also dent someone's progress through life.

To get around the city streets, you've got a trendy-looking Pest Control van – a disguise, of course. Within the vehicle there are more

Baddger Assault Flame Unit
Length.....1030mm
Weight.....13.6Kg
Range.....20m
Duration.....8mins

BUILDING A CASTLE

The Punisher comic has been around since 1988. Its hero, Frank Castle, is a one-man vigilante force. Marvel, to their credit, opted to avoid the tiresome superhero format, choosing instead a normal man, albeit remarkably muscle-bound. To add to this realism his adversaries are, in the main, normal people (one storyline involved a crooked boxing promoter), but the occasional fantastic mutant has been known to creep in. Frank Castle is up there with the rest of his comic colleagues in the latest trend for characterisation and vulnerability.

Movie buffs may have noticed the film of the comic recently doing the rounds. If you blinked you will have missed it. The film, with Dolph Lundgren as the main man, was not well received and as a result should be out on video soon. For dedicated Punisher fans only.

F1 Sub Machine Gun

Length	925mm
Weight	3.266Kg
Calibre	9mm
C-Rate	600rpm

weapons – who said you didn't come prepared! The five high-power weapons include kick-ass things like an AK-47, a flame thrower and a grenade launcher. When a section starts you must choose which one you want operative. An incorrect choice can result in trouble at the end of the level, when the computer automatically fires your weapon against a preset obstruction. For instance, the pulse gun is no match for the juggernaut.

Other things that prevent you cleaning up the streets are the Innocents. Yes, people like you and

■ **You see all these weapons; why, they're the most powerful in the World. One shot from any of these could blow your head clean off.**

me caught in the crossfire or taken hostage by The Trust. Shooting these poor folks results in termination of the game, leaving The Punisher wondering 'Am I no better than those I seek to punish?'

However, in this game, familiarity really does breed contempt. All the screens are slight variations on others. Perhaps a few more hoods or the odd box lying around, but in general there is no variation on the formula. The gameplay itself soon becomes tiring; not what you would expect of such a high profile game. If I was a member of the cult following that the character most certainly has, I would feel very disappointed – I might even take up my own form of retribution.

RATINGS

AMIGA 68%

£24.99
OUT NOW

As with the ST version, the mouse is an excellent substitute for the joystick. However, response is slightly jerky. The varied sound effects make up for it. The gameplay is very similar throughout, becoming repetitive the longer you play. With virtually identical graphics and marginally improved sound compared to the ST, this version is by no means an improvement.

ATARI ST 65%

£24.99
OUT NOW

Using the mouse instead of the joystick allows more accurate movement of the crosshairs. In conjunction with the clear screen layout, this makes the action fast and your response quick. The gunshot sounds are acceptable and the intro tune is all the soundtrack you need. Gameplay is repetitive and I can't see any addiction after it's been completed. If you've seen the film, you won't have been looking forward to the game – just as well.

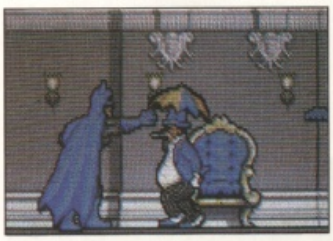
BATMAN

SUNSOFT ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

No surprises here; like the computer versions, you play a shadow in the darkness, a criminal's nightmare, the only hope for a desperate city – Batman.

Gotham city enters its 200th anniversary celebrations and the Joker decides to revenge the city for his accident in the chemical factory

There have been two Robins. The first, Dick Grayson, moved on to lead the Teen Titans.

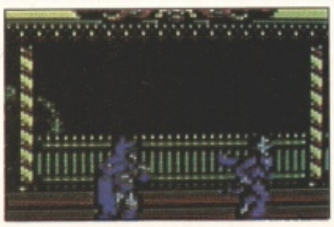


■ **Batman on the Mega Drive. You're in Gotham's city streets wiping out all the bad**

which left him with a perpetually-smiling face. Your job is to clear Gotham city of the self-proclaimed king of the underworld. And, naturally kick his evil cohorts to high heaven.

You must travel through various locations in the city and battle the Joker's cronies. On reaching the end of each level you get to meet the end-of-level guardian, beat him and you progress to the next level. The first level takes place in the streets of Gotham city and from there you move on into the chemical factory, the sewers and various other equally unappealing locations until you finally reach the Cathedral for the final encounter with the Joker.

The Joker's bodyguard must be defeated before you can get your



hands on the evil genius who has spoiled your day at the office

Batman is of the platform search and shoot genre. You can enter into fisticuffs with the Joker's supporters or blast them from a distance. The game's late in coming, but well worth adding to your collection.

RATINGS

NINTENDO 82%

£29.95
OUT NOW

There are loads of weapons to collect even though the levels are rather short. Many of the enemies that attack look as though they've been hijacked from other games. For instance, ! positive there are ninja turtles lurking in the game. The game is very good and there are some stunning graphical effects – particularly where Batman dies in a burst of flames.

MEGA DRIVE 79%

£34.95
OUT NOW

Sadly the Mega Drive's potential has been grossly under used. The graphics are large and the sound effects adequate, but the backdrops are monotonously plain and nothing clever has been attempted. The action occurs over a large area – however the enemy onslaught is not very effective.

RAVE

TODD'S ADVENTURE IN SLIME

EPYX ■ ARACDE ADVENTURE

Marshal "Spotty Mallone" Rosenthal grabs a bottle of Oxy 10 and prepares to blitz his zits...

Just imagine getting up in the morning, jumping out of bed and walking into the bathroom. It's not a pretty sight. There's a massive zit bulging out from the side of your face – ugh! What else is there to do? It's too late for zit cream, you're gonna have to bust that sucker! Splat! Bull's-eye.

PRIME SLIME TIME

Who among us can forget the first time we stuck our fist into a gooey, gross, mess of 'stuff'? Look around, it's everywhere – especially in the States. The supermarkets have little machines selling slime balls for only 50 cents. Crack them out of their plastic shells and look for a target. Hit a wall and watch them stick, then slowly drool downward. Or go to a toy store where you'll find a variety of delights.

Fresh from the sewer comes the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Ooze, ready for slingin' and flingin'. Plus they have their Pizzeria cannon playset – so you can hit the walls indiscriminately. Not to forget Slimer from Ghostbusters. He's got his own can of the stuff, plus a toothpaste that's not only gloopy and green, but has the aroma of bubble gum. And there's still the bargain-basement bubble maker that lets slime balls loose in the breeze. Narly!

■ **Jump in that pool of water for a nice, clean wash. It's guaranteed to wipe the pustulas and puss off your face..**

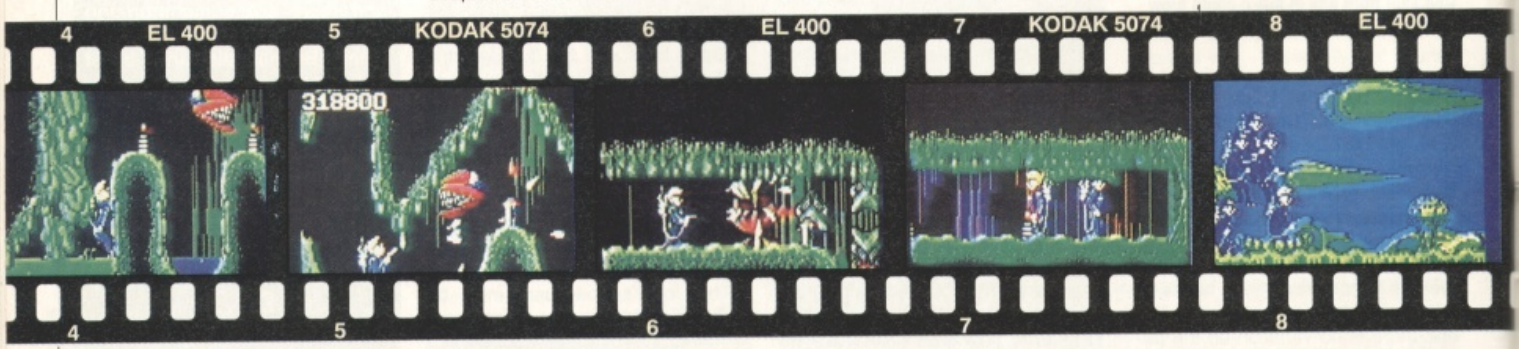
We're talking gross here, totally disgusting. In fact, we're talking *Slimeworld*, a place where your worst teenage dreams come true.

The trouble starts when a young adventurer's spaceship runs into deep trouble and becomes disabled. The only planet within two hundred light years is the infamous Slimeworld. Cautiously, Todd approaches the planet, manages to land, and ventures outside. On seeing his surroundings and the creatures that inhabit them, our intrepid adventurer soon decides he'd rather be elsewhere. But before he starts to fix his damaged ship, Todd catches a glint of glass in the goo that covers the ground. After discovering that the planet's full of gems, Todd decides Slimeworld isn't that bad after all.

The world of slime is split into six distinct areas, all with their own scenario. Tread carefully as you trek through the underground worlds, they are filled with Buger (sic) monsters, pus-filled blisters (that explode in your face – ugh!) and deep, heavy cavities brimming over with gooey, sticky slime. Gross!

Encountering any of the above monstrosities will quickly turn you green – definitely not with envy. Furthermore, if you get too much of a bad thing, you will literally burst – just like a zit! But, don't forget, there are gems to be collected, so don't hang around admiring the scenery.

Occasionally, you'll encounter proof of other adventurers that have tried their luck. The lure of glorious riches has spurred many an adventurer to load himself up with weapons etc and step through the goo. Much of their high-tech armoury is still lying around, discarded or – more likely – still intact after its owner has long since burst.



Talking of useful goodies to be picked up en route, there are plenty of packs that will ease your adventure. Power packs containing water are just the thing to fill up your pistol – after all, a zit loves nothing less than a good dousing. Water blows to bits anything it encounters; be care-

EWORLD

ful not to have those bits hit you, as they'll stick. Other items lying around include a jetpack for avoiding the tedium of climbing and walking, and shields to protect you from slime creatures and their slime.

Up to six players can participate in the multi-player game via the comlynx (you're always blonde while your mates have black hair). The game now becomes a real team effort, with everyone helping each other out. To take away that green complexion, you can water cannon your friends and they can do the same for you. If no-one else has got any water, you'll have to pray that you come across a pool of water, or there could be a terrible mess of green goo.

Slime is constantly pouring down in multicoloured configurations, and pus balloons form around you then explode in your face. While you run and jump around the caverns, it's worth noting that if you hit a wall or ceiling, you will stick to it. The thought of amazingly gloopy surroundings is disgusting, but this attribute can come in very useful when avoiding creatures. Crud with feet and wings move about, chasing and harassing everyone. It's a good thing there are bombs lying about. Set one in place – BLAM! – the dudes are history.

The six scenarios vary in content and difficulty. The first is *supposed* to be the easiest – just find the exit and escape. The second, called Exploration, has a rescue ship heading to pick you up – *if* you can find your way to the surface. Level three places you in the darkest recesses of Slimeworld, while the fourth presents the problem of a planet meltdown. The fifth takes your gun off you, and the final one has no restarts. Tough!

So, will you pick this up? Believe it! *Slimeworld* is the kind of game where you dig in with both hands and get really dirty. Which you will – and have a great time in doing so.

RATINGS

ATARI LYNX
92%

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OUT 11/90

The slime is great: superbly animated. Individual animation of Todd and the other characters is also smooth (watch the sequence where he washes off when hitting a pool of water). The sound is major, with cute theme music running in the background to lull you into a false sense of security.
Helpful additions include an in-game manual (giving clues to level content) and a password system which allows you to enter levels directly, complete with full health

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SIMULCRA

MICROPROSE ■ ARCADE ACTION

Graftgold go futuristic and meet Julian Boardman in the 21st century

In the 21st century there will be no wars, no pointless waste of life. Countries settle feuds in a safer more economic way. The battles familiar with the 20th century are now held in battle simulators.

Select pilots have the fate of their country on their shoulders as they fight to the death inside the battle matrix. No more problems, the computer environment eliminates the risk of blowing up mankind, and keeps this on a much more acceptable level.

■ Destroying certain enemies results in equipment being left behind.

However, all is not happy in the garden, a virus has corrupted the battlescape generator, Simulcra, and is using the energy contained in the system to fling the Simulcraft into a near hopeless scenario. The only hope is to systematically destroy all the energy projectors, which are strategically placed across the 30 battle matrices, starving Simulcra of the energy required to operate the matrix.

Your craft is a Surface Reconnaissance Vehicle (SRV) which is equipped with swing-wings (which can be folded away) and a front-mounted laser. Initially, this is all you have, but other hardware can be picked up across the matrix as a bonus reward for destroying the robots, gun turrets etc. The hardware can be one of six items each detailed in the information box.

The destruction of each generator must be carried out in a specific order; one generator's energy lines preventing access to another sector of each matrix. The matrices themselves are of one of six varieties: Spaceports, Starcarriers, Cities, Circuit Boards, Starfortresses and finally Mazes. All of these get progressively difficult, meaning long hours of practice and joystick bashing for you before a decent penetration can be made into *Simulcra*'s gameworld.

There are a wide variety of computer-generated enemies to vent those pent-up hormones upon, from roving dodgem lookalikes to helicopters, jets and Eliminators reminiscent of Tron. A few seconds on the old fire button should be enough for most of the little loves, but a cunningly placed missile may help when things are getting tight.

It would be misguided to exaggerate the slightly poorer aspects of the game, particularly as MicroProse's PR lady is so good-looking. On the whole it plays excellently, and I would be pretty chuffed to have lined a few industry pockets with my £25 to get this little number.

BOMBS AWAY

FFG – Fire & Forget missile. Use these with the TAD system and they'll home in on a target.

TAD – Target and Display System. Line up the loc-on and your missiles will home in on a target.

SU – Speed Up. Improve speed and turn rate.

RAD – Radar. Keep an eye on this at all times. Very useful when disoriented.

ECM – Electronic Counter Measures. Will confuse enemy missiles by combating their radar.

VGM – Variable Geometry Wings. Extra wings that, er, vary their geometry

RATINGS

ATARI ST 82%

£24.99
OUT 10/90

Graftgold have come up with the goods yet again. The filled-in vector graphics are very well done, without a hint of flicker. And, no matter how many flying, hovering, crawling enemy craft there are onscreen, the game never slows down – which probably accounts for the sparse sound effects.

AMIGA 85%

£24.99
OUT 10/90

The improved Amiga sound effects have more character and depth, but ultimately show that, regardless of sound, the game's a great little player.

■ There are 30 levels, split into several sub levels, of increasing complexity to battle through. Spaceports first, followed by star carriers, cities, circuit boards, star fortresses and finally mazes.

NARC™

NO-ONE HAD THE GUTS UNTIL NOW!

WILLIAMS

The hottest coin-op game in the past two years now comes storming on to your computer - with a vengeance! Controlling a Miami-Vice-style cop, you crusade through the criminal world of pushers and dealers, shooting, arresting and basically destroying everything in sight! Every level of tense and non-stop action introduces greater hazards, traps and firepower in what has been hailed as the greatest shoot'em-up coin-op game ever!

ocean

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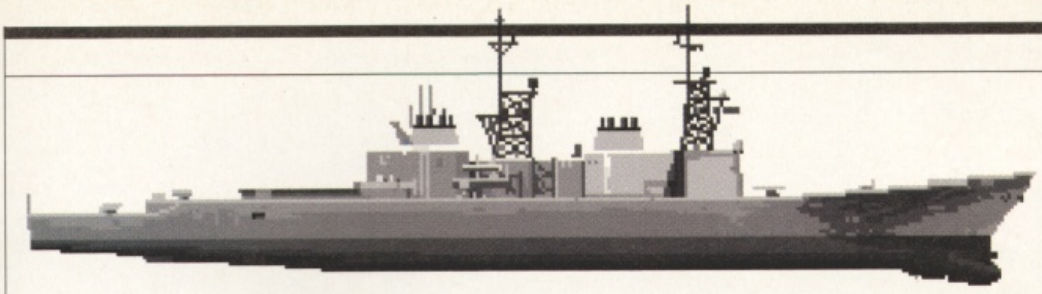
BETRAYAL

RAINBIRD



■ The USS Spruance destroyer is 170 metres long and 15 metres wide, with an 8.8 metre draught. One mean mutha.

OPERATION SPRUANCE

PARSEC SOFTWARE ■ SIMULATION

Fleet Admiral Les Ellis takes command of an American warship and sets sail for the Gulf

Take a step one year into the future; there's trouble in the Persian Gulf. Iran is attacking civil merchant vessels and threatening to close down the oil supply to the rest of the world. The American response is perhaps predictable: naval units have been sent to the area to ensure passage of ships and oil. The Russians' position on the matter is that if anyone messes with them, they'll retaliate – and if they don't get their oil soon, they'll be trouble. There are also rumours of an imminent Russian invasion of Iran. The tension is mounting... (Where's Kate Adie?)

You have five specific missions to undertake. These can range from protecting an oil tanker from some psycho Iranians to attacking a Russian carrier trying to gain control of Iran (and, subsequently, the oil output). The missions, which have to be completed in order, all start with a briefing from HQ.

The briefings must be read carefully as they can give important clues to the status of the area and the exact details of the mission, which, despite the temptation to go looking for the Iraquis every go, must be carried out to the letter.

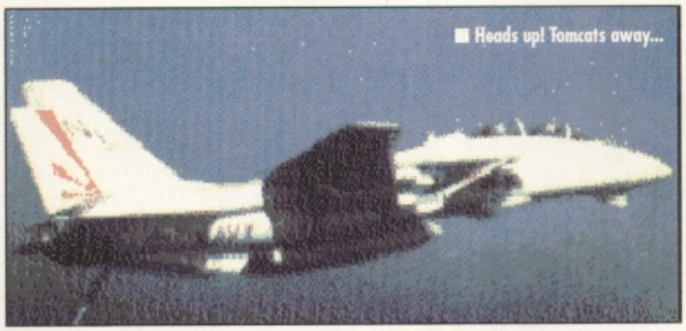
Your ship is armed with a selection of missiles which can handle planes, ships and submarines. You also control the defence utilities – chaff dispenser, flares and decoys – from here.

Other areas worth a constant look are the *damage monitor*, which shows the dents in your ship, and the *navigation radar*, giving advance warnings of any incoming traffic.

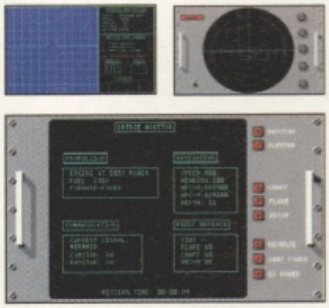
And, let's face it, you're bound to hit trouble soon. Whether it's a F-14 Tomcat or a Boghammer-13 assault boat, you'll quickly need to master the ship's artillery.

Your main offensive system is missiles. You've three types available: Harpoon, Sparrow and Asroc. Also, gun emplacements are on the fore and aft in the shape of Mk-45 guns, and there's a useful Close In Weapons System for 'whites of their eyes' combat.

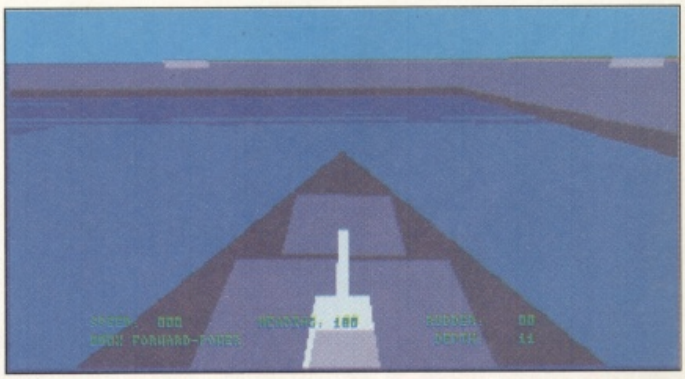
The strategy element comes into its own during actual combat, be it with Russians or Iranians. Just try hitting the Russian carrier when it is surrounded by its escort ships and there are planes coming at you at high speed. In fact, the action can get exceedingly frenetic for a strategy game.



■ Heads up! Tomcats away...



■ Keep an eye on incoming vessels with the comprehensive radar screen. Satellite information is vital if you're to find your way around the Gulf.



■ Ahh. The easy life of the seafarer. Wind blowing through your hair, gulls flying above... err, is that a bunch of psycho Iranians in the distance?

IRANIAN ANECDOTES

- A census concluded that there were 33,591,875 people living in Iran during 1976. Today it's reckoned the population is less because of the enormous death toll during the country's many wars.
- According to informed sources in the RAZE office, sales of Cat Stevens records have always been popular in Iran.
- Ronald Reagan doesn't remember a thing about Iran, but he remembers forgetting about it.

RATINGS

AMIGA 80%

£24.95
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The sound is sparse but atmospheric – lots of engine effects and so on. Graphics are purely functional and could be better – especially on the bridge. And it's probably this presentation that keeps *Operation Spruance* good and not great. The strategic elements are all there, with a decent spattering of combat to keep everyone awake. It's an involving game but how will it fair against *Silent Service II*?

GREMLINS 2™

THE NEW BATCH

POSTER PREVIEW

BURNING RUBBER

Who are we to turn down a look at the outstanding Lotus Esprit Turbo, the basis for Gremlin's next release. Mason Storm straps in and goes for a test drive....

LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO SE

SPECIFICATON.

ENGINE: LONGITUDINAL MID REAR-WHEEL DRIVE. CAPACITY 2174CC, 4 CYLINDERS IN LINE.
BORE/STROKE: 95.3MM/76.2MM.
COMPRESSION RATIO: 8.0 TO 1.
VALVE GEAR: DOHC, 4V/CYL.
FUEL AND IGNITION: MULTI-POINT FUEL INJECTION GARRETT T803 TURBOCHARGER WITH INTER-COOLER LINKED TO MAPPED ELECTRONIC IGNITION.
TRANSMISSION: 5-SPEED MANUAL.
GEAR RATIOS/MPH/1000RPM: 3.360/5.6 (1ST), 2.050/9.2, 1.380/13.7, 1.030/18.4, 0.820/23.1
POWER: 264BHP/6300RPM.
TORQUE: 260LB FT/3900RPM.
SUSPENSION: FRONT AND REAR: INDEPENDENT COIL SPRINGS, TELESCOPIC DAMPERS, ANTI-ROLL BARS, FRONT: DOUBLE WISHBONES REAR: TWIN-RADIUS ARMS AND TRANSVERSE LINKS.
STEERING: RACK AND PINION, 3.0 TURNS LOCK TO LOCK.
BRAKES: FRONT: 10.2INS VENTILATED DISKS REAR: 10.8INS DISKS.
WHEELS/TYRES: CAST ALLOY. FRONT: 7INS, REAR: 8.5INS RIMS, GOODYEAR EAGLE TYRES, FRONT: 215/50ZR15 REAR: 245/50ZR15.
KERB WEIGHT: 2929LB

In April of this year, Gremlin Graphics signed a historic agreement with top car manufacturer Lotus to produce console and computer games based on their impressive range of sports cars.

It was *Monty Mole* that put Gremlin on the map over five years ago, and since then they have had a string of successes. For this coming season they have lined up an impressive range of exciting releases.

Lotus' history goes back yonks before any of our readers were born (okay, so if you're over 40, you're probably the exception to the rule...). Lotus was founded by innovator Colin Chapman over 40 years ago, to build and race cars – and live out the Englishman's long time dream. Lotus were to become one of the track racing world's most successful teams, with Lotus drivers scoring no fewer than 79 World Championship victories, winning the World Drivers' title on six occasions and the World Manufacturers' Award seven times. From their roots in England, they have conquered the world; no other Formula One team can claim to have equalled their success.

Gremlin and Lotus signed a joint agreement earlier this year and the computer market is expecting something special from Gremlin's first release from the deal, *Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge*. The brief to its designers, Shaun Southern and Andrew Morris (together known as Magnetic Fields), was to produce a game which was better than any similar game on the market, and one which created a new challenge for the player – it seems, from preview versions, that they have succeeded.

The game features smooth, filled-in 3-D graphics – like those of *Hard Drivin'* – with superb animation and accurate interaction with the other cars on the track. What makes *Lotus Esprit* entirely different from all other car simulators that have gone before is its combination of 3-D graphics and two-player action. The head-to-head challenges of the game – created by a tension-building splitscreen effect – are without doubt its greatest asset. Along with the hills, valleys and vicious bends, it can make for some hair-raising, competitive racing.

The package contains 32 individual tracks, held in different countries, with three levels of difficulty. Your ultimate aim is to accrue enough points to qualify for a Lotus Licence. Points are gained by finishing races in the top ten. But if you finish first in a race, you'll start the next race in last place – increasing the challenge of the game's title.

The tracks are based accurately on the originals. Pitstops are included in the action and if you have to stop for fuel, it's up to you to decide at what point in the race it is best to top up in order to maintain positional advantage.

If you're fast and consistent enough to get a Lotus licence, you can fill in a form enclosed with the game, send it off to Gremlin and receive a personal certificate to show off to your friends.

GAME: **LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE**
PRODUCER: **GREMLIN GRAPHICS**
VERSIONS: **AMIGA (£24.99), ATARI ST (£24.99), IBM PC (£24.99)**

■ Yes, that's all very well, but how does it compare to my clapped-out Metro.

■ The two-player action in *Lotus Esprit* could get it the cult following that *Pitstop II* received when it came out on the C64..

■ Every time you go into the pit, you have to balance your thirst for petrol with the need to get back out on the track.

ESPRITS ON FILM

● The Lotus Esprit became part of the British Establishment when it was used by James Bond in The Spy Who Loved Me. Who can forget the classic scene where Roger Moore drives out of the sea in a white Esprit to the astonishment of the locals.

● Pretty Woman, the most successful film of the year, features Richard Gere roaring through Beverly Hills in his lawyer's brand-new metallic grey Turbo Esprit. Ahh, that's the life...

● In Cannonball Run II, Sammy Davis Jnr and Dean Martin dress up as priests and try to outrun the police in an inconspicuous red Esprit.

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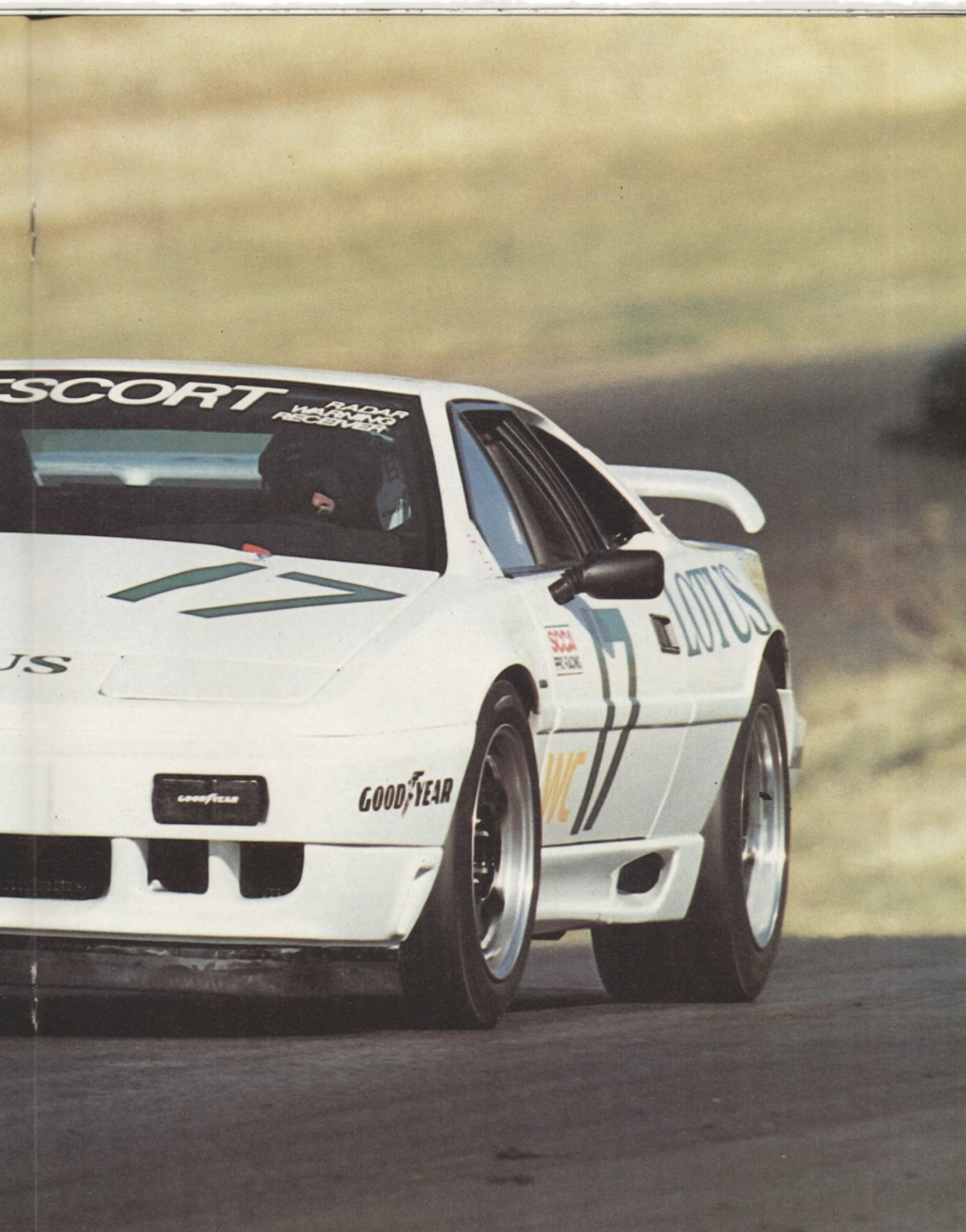
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SHADOW OF THE BEAST II

PSYGNOSIS ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

Travelling to a far-off world, Les Ellis finds a plethora of beasts and free T-shirts – not too different from his own home, actually

Once upon a time, the Beast Lord, Maletoth, transformed your body into that of a beast by subjecting you to the evil, dark arts of his mages. You became a minion to the Beast Lord until one fateful day you were forced to watch your father's execution. The traumatic ceremony caused you to remember your previous life, and your vow to avenge your father and destroy those who transformed you.

With your beast powers you scoured the land looking for revenge, fighting your way through a barrage of adversaries until you met the Beast Mage in a final showdown from which you emerged the winner. So runs the scenario of *Beast I*.

Your human form was returned to you, while at the same time taking away your beast powers. The Beast Mage, however, was not finished with you. He has now kidnapped your sister and taken her to a far-off place. Here he plans to transform her into beast form and have her become his warrior messenger, your previous job.

On hearing this, you buy passage to Kara-moon where you begin the quest for your lost sister. Remember, you have no beast powers to aid you in your quest, you are only armed with a mace. Will your human powers be strong enough to end the Beast Mage's reign of terror?

The setting is familiar – but the inhabitants are not. Prepare yourself for bats, huge red sea dragons, iron men with chains and other colourful characters. Most can be killed with a quick bash from your mace, which

■ You start your heroic quest...

■ ...but before you know it, you're history and a rock and roll guitar sings of your untimely death.

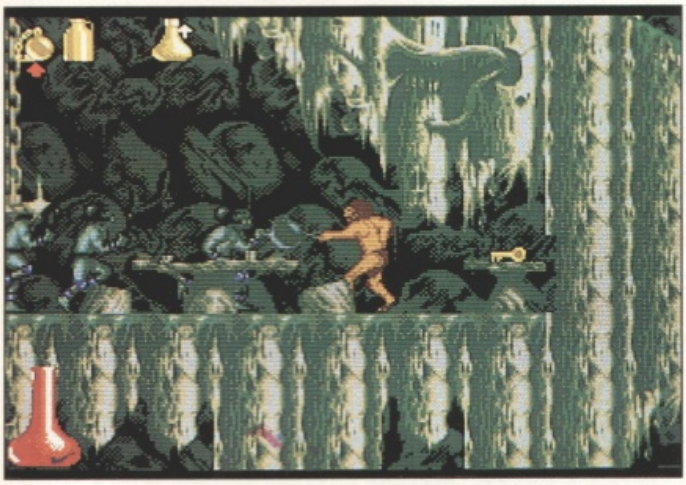
BARING THE BEAST

- The original *Shadow of the Beast* won six international awards, including best graphics, best sound and best entertainment program.
- The code for *Beast II* was programmed on a 25Mhz PC running PDS (Programming Development System). The graphics were drawn on a Amiga 2000 running a 25Mhz 68030 processor. A normal Amiga runs at 7.16Mhz.
- *Beast II* has taken one year to complete. It contains 3.5Mb of code, containing 2Mb of graphics and 1Mb of music and sound effects.
- Like the original, a T-shirt was bundled with *Beast II*. It soon disappeared from the RAZE offices. "I'll wear anyfin' black," said Les.

■ One disk of the two-disk package solely contains the impressive *Beast II* demo. With an intro sequence like this, there's no need for a manual.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST II

■ *The Shadow of the Beast II* is far more involving than *Beast I* – and you still get a 'free' T-shirt.



■ There you were, just strolling through Trowbridge, when who should you meet but the editor.

extends from your arm, however some are more resilient and need 'personal' attention.

Any hits you sustain from the enemy decrease your life force, contained in a red bottle. When this runs out, you are dead, forever – no more lives!

There are ropes hanging around and by jumping on and climbing up these you can access other levels. Jumping on platforms can also reveal hidden passages and new worlds.

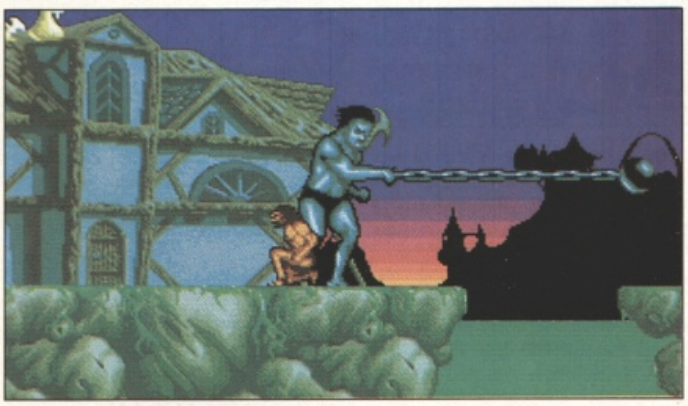
Lying around the place you'll find plenty of things to pick up. They're pretty easy to see, most indicated by a red arrow. Gold can be found with which you can purchase weapons and food (for energy) and bribe your way into other areas.

Not all of the creatures in Karamoon are hell-bent on your destruction, some are quite prepared to talk to you and will provide information about objects or other characters. They can also be used to help you overcome obstacles and puzzles along the way, whether they want to or not. If they don't want to help, twist their arm (if they've got one).

Eventually, you'll find your little sis. But not before you've overcome the extensive range of characters: trees with arms, demons, giant jumping piranhas, acid drops, a stone man with a pressing engagement, etc. every time you think you achieved something, another muscle-bound breed come to test your reflexes.

BEASTIALITY

- **Alastair Crowley named himself The Beast because he reckoned he was the most evil person in the world. He died soon after. Ho, ho.**
- **Despite attempts by the Army to trap the fabled Beast of Exmoor, it has never been caught. To this day it is still running loose, killing sheep.**



■ *Beast II* contains a far wider range of graphics than the original, with many more puzzles and endless enemy creatures.

AMIGA 83%

£34.99
OUT NOW

It's a sheer pleasure to watch the loading screens and listen to the incredible music which fill disk one (of two). You shouldn't have to worry reading the manual's story, the opening scenes tell the story beautifully. Of course, the same could be said of the original game, but the content of the sequel goes nearer to an enthralling game. It's not just a case of wandering about, doing very little, in *Beast II*, the game is full of puzzles to do and baddies to pass. It goes without saying that the graphics are superb; full of colour, detail and variety. Improvements have been made with the scrolling; *Beast II*'s is multi-directional parallax. Sound, too, is top notch, with an array of effects and a great electric guitar piece every time you snuff it (this can be turned off if necessary). It is the actual control which lets down *Beast II*. The response is slow and inaccurate, making fast action scenes impossible to conquer. That aside, the game is a major improvement over the original – you won't be completing this in a day!

RATINGS

RAVE

FUTURE BASKETB

HEWSON SOFTWARE ■ SPORTS SIMULATION

All hell's breaking loose — the Harlem Globetrotters have hit town on acid. Julian Boardman pulls on steel toe-capped trainers and prepares to tread the boards.

March 2190: unemployment is the nation's main occupation, and with so little money, violent crime their pastime. The authorities need some form of entertainment; some way of channelling all that anti-social fervour. In the sport of Future Basketball they have it.

Let's play ball...

The 'game of the future' is very similar to present day basketball: the teams each consist of five players, and the court is marked with the familiar shooting areas (Ds) and contains the recently introduced three-point line.

Action is faster and more frenetic than you've ever experienced in any modern day sport. In fact, it's fair to say that it bears more than a passing resemblance to that other futuristic sport, *Speedball*. The game is as frantic and just as violent.

EVERYTHING YOU NEVER NEEDED TO KNOW ABOUT BASKETBALL

● Highest score in a basketball game in the UK: Nottingham YMCA Falcons 250, Mansfield Pirates 145 (the Pirates had a 120 point head start!).

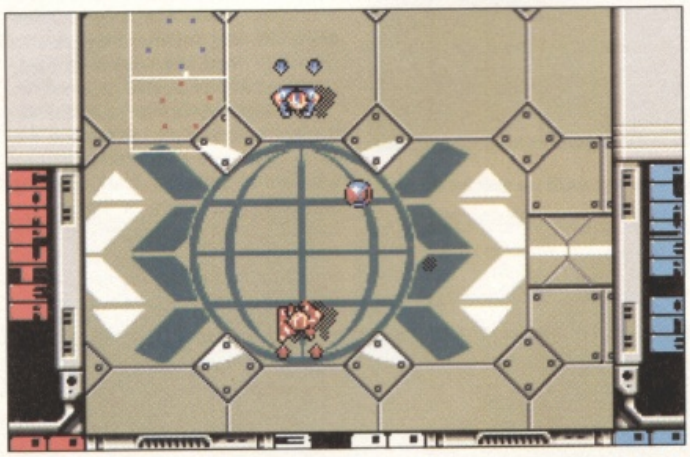
● This all-American game was developed in modern form by a German, and the most World Championship wins belong to the USSR!

● The Aztecs in the 1500s played a version called Ollamalitzil. The victorious participant won the clothes of all the spectators. Strange, but true!

● After playing Future Basketball all day, Derek Chapman sauntered along and beat me into the ground within five minutes — he was lucky.

● Office Basketball, a recently-introduced Raze version of the normal game, can be played with just two wastepaper baskets and four walls. The game is just as violent!

● Future Basketball was programmed by Imperial Software, with music from The Maniacs of Noise (and what a bunch of ladz they are).



You can warm up in a one- or two-player match and then try your luck against some *real* competition in a league (choose from teams like the Texas Maniacs and Gut Rippers). More factors are added with the choice of four skills levels, three different playing surfaces, and a variable match duration from six minutes to an hour (phew!).

The fire-button performs three tasks: one defensive, two offensive. When you've lost possession, there are two ways to get the ball back. You can either run around aimlessly and hope that some generous person in the opposition happens to chuck the ball your way — not very likely! — or you can run around the court, randomly pressing the fire-button, slide-tackling everyone in sight — which is generally a lot more fun, and also more productive.

Offensively, pressing the fire button either initiates a shot (if you are standing still) or passes the ball to the nearest player in the direction you are facing. Control always stays with the player in possession (or nearest to the ball if defending); you can spot him quite easily as he's the poor chap being chased by two arrows. You can keep track of the whole team's positions on a small court map only available on the Amiga version, similar to the *Kick Off* pitch scanner.

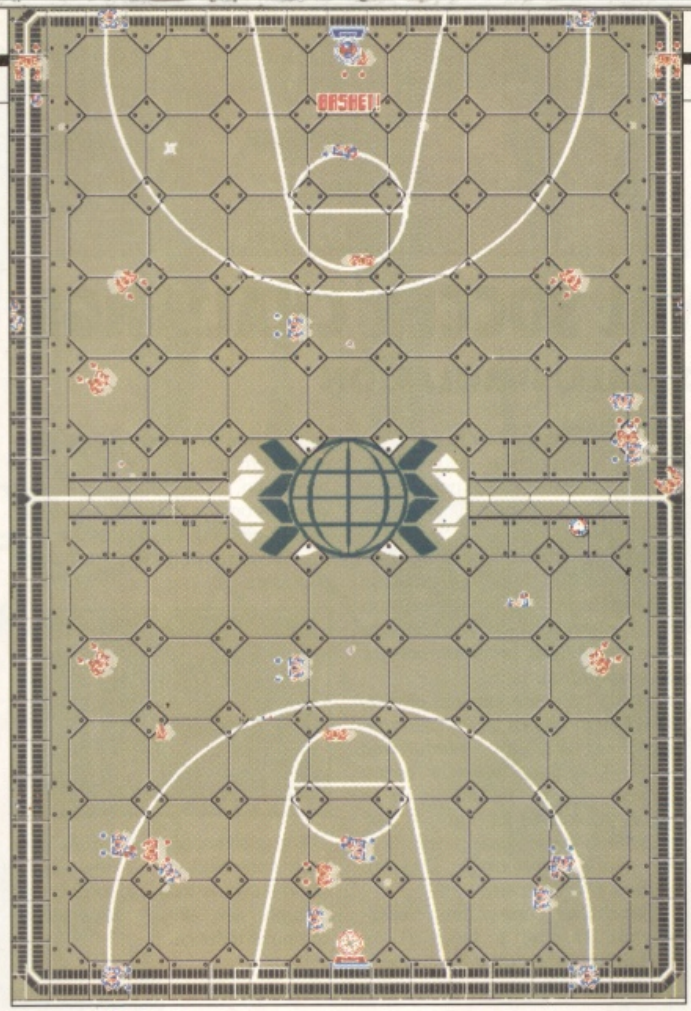
Points are gained by scoring baskets, with the same scoring system as that of today's game: normally two points, or three points if you're lucky from outside the semi-circle zone (of

TACKLE TIPS:

★ Don't tackle aimlessly. It can be rather embarrassing sprawled all over the floor while your opponent is happily dunking a basket.

★ When your opponent is taking a throw-in, stand next to the receiving player so you can tackle him as soon as he receives the ball.

TBALL



COURT COLLECTABLES

SHURIKEN STARS Run over these and watch them whirr into a nearby competitor.

M-MINES Collision with these is dangerous to your health. Try to tackle one of the opposing players so he slides into one of these.

MINES Passing over these spells disaster for an approaching opponent.

POWER-UPS For a split second your speed will be boosted beyond belief.

SPINNING COINS Adds to your team's coffers; a must if you want to buy bully players.

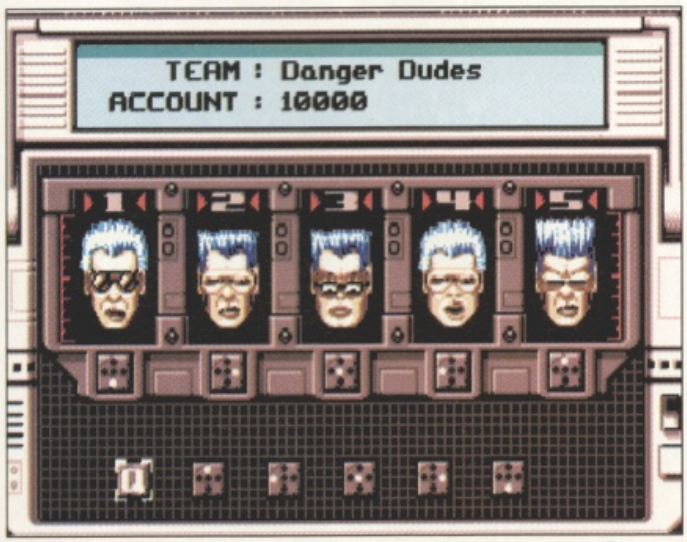
course, there are no free-throws as there are no such things as fouls!).

Now I'm sure you remember basketball from the 20th century, where if you had possession all they could do was intercept a pass, knock it from your hand or, perhaps, on a bad day, a little shoulder barge here and there. None of that namby-pamby stuff for these mean muthas! As well as ridiculously vicious sliding tackles (even off the ball), there are anti-personnel mines and shuriken stars — this isn't a sport, it's war!

Long-term playability is ensured with the inclusion of a four division league, consisting of 32 teams in total. Each team has eight strips to choose from, players' names can be changed and team formations altered. Players can also be bought with money that's scattered around the pitch. And if you don't think one player is performing to the best of his ability, you can either sell him outright or organise some sort of part exchange.

Highest international score in a basketball game was by Iraq; they recorded a score of 251 (probably against Kuwait).

The whole shebang — league positions, player stats and team members — can be saved to disk for future confrontations. It's worth taking full advantage of this option as you'll soon find yourself stuck to the screen, punching, kicking, sliding and shooting with the rest of them. (Of course, you could always spend your money on a season ticket for Millwall!)



RATINGS

AMIGA 92%

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The smooth-scrolling graphics are what you'd expect on the Amiga, but without going over the top to the point of distraction. Characters are generally well defined and very futuristic, with some great graphics on the intermediary screens. The two tunes aren't that spectacular, but the in-game sound effects are sure to make you wince as bones break and noses get squashed.

It's easy to become accustomed to the gameplay and with practice one can become very skilful — so I've been told. The 32-team league allows for much variety, the player becoming immersed in *his* current league. Like *Speedball*, this is one game you'll come back to months later.

ATARI ST 89%

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Screen area is somewhat squashed as the score panels are moved to the sides of the court — it can often become very difficult to spot the ball, especially on a clapped-out 12-inch TV. The schematic 'player map', which was so useful on the Amiga version, has gone, as have the tremendous sound effects, but the gameplay survives, and just about saves it from becoming a middle-of-the-road sports game.

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHALLENGE

MICROSTYLE ■ FOOTBALL SIMULATION

Les Ellis laces up his boots, puts on his kit and takes on the world in MicroStyle's impressive soccer sim

Just arriving too late to be linked to any football tournament, MicroStyle's 1990 footy game adds a whole new dimension to the old game.

There are four main options: practice, World Cup, Super League and disk load/save. The practice section allows you to brush up on your technique for passing, penalties, corners and goalkeeping.

World Cup mode lets you choose a team from one of six groups containing all the top international teams. The Super League option enables you to participate in a league comprised of the 16 best teams from the footballing nations of the world, including England, Scotland and Germany.

After choosing one of three difficulty levels, it's down to the pitch. As the players come out of the tunnel – seen from a very neat camera view – and warm up, you can size up the opposition. The whole match is viewed from the player's perspective, literally viewing the rest of the pitch from above and behind the player's shoulders.

The goalkeeper is, thankfully, computer controlled, and a real monkey when it comes to foiling forging runs through an almost impenetrable computer defence.

ATARI ST 81%

£24.99
OUT NOW

This is probably the best soccer simulation available; for sheer accuracy and realism it can't be beaten. The graphics system is superb, not just the perspective but also the smooth way the 'camera' sweeps around from player to player – although the slow, strategic action on the pitch puts it in a different league to *Kick Off*. Tackles are much more realistic from this 'on the pitch in the thick of the action' view – more satisfying. The officials also add a bit more realism to the proceedings. Sound is nothing special, and the game is sadly lacking a two-player option.

AMIGA, IBM PC OUT NOW

MicroStyle assure us that there are no differences between the three versions – pity they weren't finished in time for review!

WORLD CUP COMPETITION

Enter the RAZE World Cup Compo by answering these ten questions...

1. Who is the only person to play in and manage a World Cup winning side?
2. Which country won the first World Cup?
3. Who was the top scorer in the last World Cup?
4. Which player scored the fastest World Cup goal.
5. What animal found the World Cup in 1966?
6. Who holds currently holds the Jules Rimet trophy?
7. Which player has appeared in most World Cup matches?
8. Who is the only goalkeeper to captain a World Cup winning side?
9. Which substitute scored the most goals in Italia '90?
10. Complete the following sentence. "Some people are on the pitch. They think it's all over..."

Send your answers on the back of a postcard to CROWD PLEASER, RAZE MAGAZINE, UNIT 3, 7 BACK STREET, TROWBRIDGE, WILTSHIRE BA14 8LH. Entries must reach us by October 14. The first correct entry picked out of the dugout will receive an all-expenses paid trip to the plush RAZE offices and get to play the whole team at *Kick Off 2*. (Bring your own joystick, Derek's broken all ours.) If you win the league, we'll pay for the trip back home... Only kidding, there's a mystery prize up for grabs!

ZIRIAX

WHIZ KIDZ/SOFTWARE BUSINESS ■ SHOOT-'EM-UP

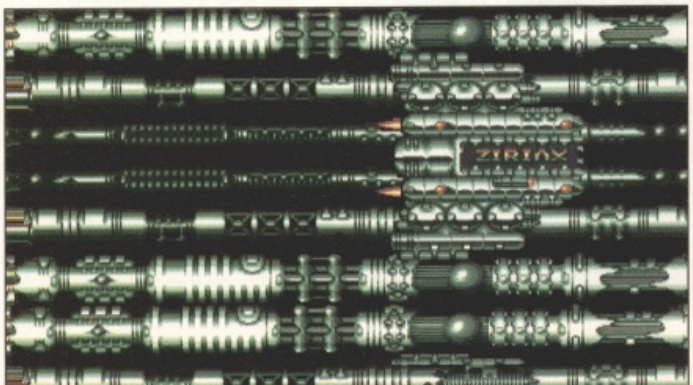
You've played the arcade game, you've played the original, now play the clone with Les Ellis

You're in control of an X52 fighter with which you can go up against the best and still beat them to a pulp. After a long flight you reach the first base and begin to engage the enemy. Soon you realise that your built-in gun will not be enough to return the bad guys to the pit from whence they came. Certain aliens, when shot, will leave behind a power-up pod. Collect these for reverse shot, missiles, outboard pods and more.

The action initially takes place in underground caverns inhabited by the weirdest bunch of aliens ever amassed in one place. Dodge the guided missiles that are fired from the back of trucks and make sure you don't spend too long admiring the end-of-level alien.

From the caverns you progress to steel lined tunnels. If you keep going there are four levels of action, each more difficult than the previous.

■ Before engaging in battle you take off from a huge mothership.



■ Life on the first level is a doddle compared to what's in store on later levels.

AMIGA 75%

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OUT 10/90

The graphics are well designed and there are some great-looking aliens; the action fast, tense and furious; the sound atmospheric. But at the end of the day it's just another *Nemesis* clone. A good one, but still a clone.

MANiX

It's a world gone mad!
Bombs drop from the sky, playing havoc with the natural order of *fat Filbert's* verdant land. *Filbert's* got to see to it that every square foot is set back to normal - that's a lot of work for our rotund hero. The trouble is, the bombs keep on coming, spikes, acid and ninja balls keep interfering and there's not much time left to get the job done.

Fear not *Filbert!* Throw the tin cans, pick up the potions, drink the tea and you may just manage to clear up the situation. And don't forget, if the going gets too tough you can enlist the help of a friend and work as a team - just try not to get in each other's way!

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MILLENNIUM

SUPER MONACO GP

SEGA ■ RACE SIMULATION

Julian "Mummy's Metro" Boardman heads to the south of France to find something quicker – and more reliable

■ You're just coming out of a tunnel on the Monaco circuit. You're fifth on lap two of three – you're hopeless!

If you haven't got a few flags and fireworks for a driving game nowadays, you can forget it. Many months of programming will end up in a box marked 'Too much like *Pole Position*'. Driving games just don't sell like they used to.

Your decisions start on the title screen. Which of the many areas of the game do you go for? It's probably best to start on a single qualifying lap. After getting a good enough time, you can try your luck in a shorter version of the main game, a three-lap race around a track looking not too dissimilar from the Monte

Carlo GP circuit, but strangely different from the main game track.

But the game won't let you anywhere near the 'big boys' tracks till you've correctly set up your car. Beginners would do well to go for the four-speed automatic (with down shift); it's underpowered but simple to use. Players who know the difference between a carburettor and a car lighter might like to risk a spin in the manual version of the four-speed box with a driveable 650 bhp. Budding Alain Prosts should go straight to the top – a seven-speed manually-geared car creating 700 bhp.

With car prepared and L-plates removed, it's time to slip into the cockpit of your finely-tuned racing machine. As you sit on the grid – and probably fall back to last place because you can't suss the controls – make note of the minimum position indicator. If you fall below this, it's curtains. However, finish the race

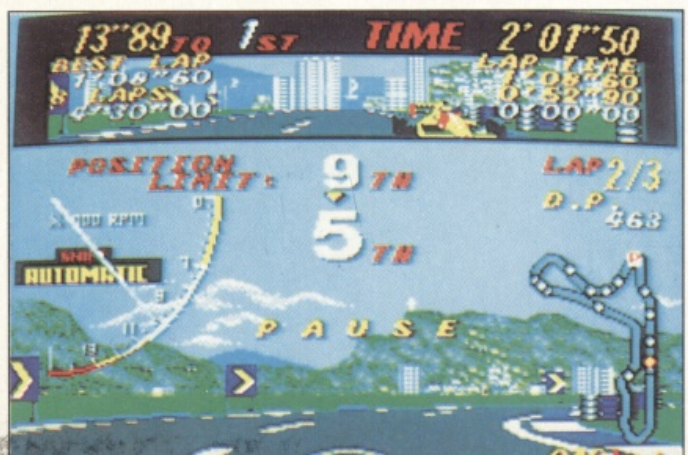
Formula One drivers lose so much weight in a race through perspiration that most have drink bottles connected to their helmets.

successfully and your time and position will be recorded for posterity. All this is very well, but eventually you'll need to move away from the solitary Monaco circuit.

The World Championship comprises the 15 current Grand Prix circuits and could easily take two hours to complete. Of course, some people haven't got that sort of time to spare, and it is for those busy bods that a password option is included. Each race in the championship is an ongoing battle. As each race commences you must choose one driver from the 16 opponents with whom you wish to go 'head-to-head'. Each driver is classified according to their racing ability. To work your way up from a lowly class C driver, you must pick a driver close to your own standards. Beat him and you move up the ratings.

Before competing in the championship, you'd be wise to make use of the practice option. Here you can choose any of the circuits and try out different car set-ups. Don't worry, you'll soon be bumping and barging with the rest of the Sennas.

■ Approaching the final lap. You'd better do a 180-degree righthander to get out of this one.



RATINGS

MEGA DRIVE 91%

£34.95
OUT NOW

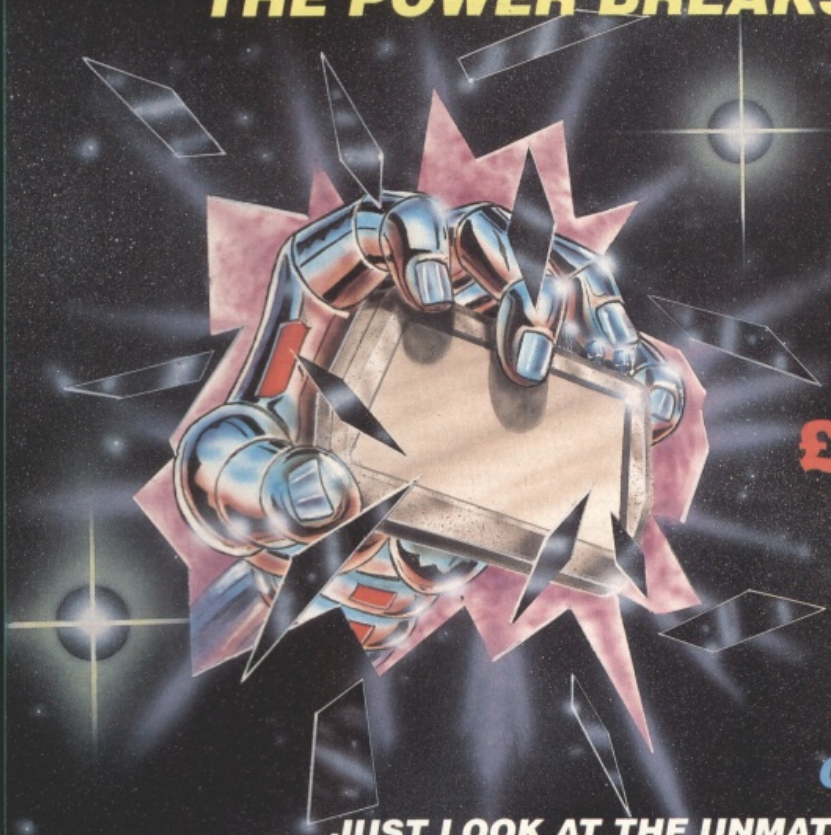
Great graphics are commonplace on the Mega Drive, so it comes as no surprise that *Super Monaco GP*'s are some of the best race sim visuals yet. Similarly, the sound effects are realistic and informative but not conspicuous. Layout of the screen is didactic, making it easy to refer to when screeching through a 180-degree corner at about 100mph over the max. The only quibble is joypad based: when steering through a tight corner, you can sometimes accidentally change gear. Still, it all adds to the fun, right?

MASTER SYSTEM 87%

£29.95
OUT NOW

The 8-bit version lacks some important elements and is not a true conversion of the Sega arcade machine. The smaller Monaco racing section is sacrificed for a two-player split-screen championship, looking like *Final Lap Twin* on the PC Engine. Due to the lack of screen room, the helpful rear view mirror has gone. But without over- emphasising the differences, the Master System version stands alone as a very competent driving game.

THE POWER BREAKS THROUGH...



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MANIX

MILLENIUM ■ ARCADE PUZZLER

Julian Boardman, the Jumping Journo, decides he hasn't had so much fun since a bouncy castle...

Poor old Filbert, eh? There he was, happily bouncing around, when all of a sudden the world goes on an acid trip, bombs drop from the sky, and totally redesign the grass till it looks like a set of carpet samples from an old Mary Quant catalogue. And so starts fat Filbert's journey to return this rather unnatural state of psychedelia to the green (and yellow) and pleasant land he was so happy with.

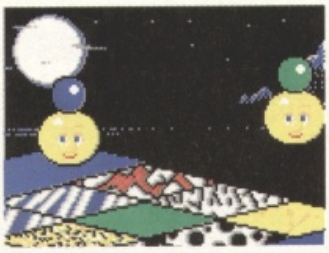
Filbert bounces and does very little else, on the whole giving the impression he wished he was somewhere else. But in the course of his bouncing, he can change the colour of the floor tiles that make up the contoured, 128-scene, isometric 3-D world. The tiles cycle through various garish designs until the correct colour is reached, at which point the cycle stops and Filbert can jump onto the next.

From these tiles can grow trees, which lock a tile's colour, incredible-looking spikes and acid pools. In fact, land nor sky are safe, with the heavens raining down cola cans, which can be collected and thrown; cups of tea; more bombs, which ruin your land once again (but can be eaten to prevent such a calamity); bees, which fly around planting the aforementioned trees; and coins for bonus points. Also, just for good measure, the odd Ninja or Viking ball, can be seen bouncing around. Both will cause you untold damage, and with the help of the bees and spikes, hound you into insanity.

Manix also features a two-player competition mode, in which players compete against each other to change as many tiles as possible to their colour (yellow or green).

It is also possible to customise the game to a large extent. Selecting the custom option allows you to alter the parameters which control the non-player aspects of the game: the number of bombs, bees, spikes, bonuses etc, when they appear, how often and so-on. It is possible to have up to eight different custom games in memory at any time and these can all be saved to disk for future use.

With 128 screens, the game is far from easy to complete. However, it can get pretty annoying covering the same old ground over and over again. It is due to this that a password option has been included giving access to any of the 16 levels.



■ The tiles are on the floor... they think it is all over... it is now!

ATARI ST 75%

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Excellent, amusing graphics are to be found throughout. The rotund hero's bouncing movements as he squishes then expands are realistic, as is the L-plate on his back throughout the first few screens. The soundtrack is made up from a random choice of tunes, but does lack a little in sound effects – some squelchy bouncy noises would have done the trick.

AMIGA 76%

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The designs of the rogue tiles are just so outrageous it is an absolute pleasure to remove them. The water around the playing area is populated by sea-monsters, submarines and fishes; none which have anything to do with the game but make interesting watching in the duller moments. The sound and graphics have been beefed up, gameplay stays the same.

HELL EXPLORER

TAITO ■ PLATFORM ARCADE

Les Ellis goes home

The world can be a frightening place at times, and no place more scary than a graveyard. But that is just the place you start your spooky quest.

The graveyard is split over many platforms, each one dripping luminous green and red drops of liquid. Throwing concealed energy balls at the drops makes them shatter into a million energy bonuses.

Being a graveyard, there are numerous tombstones lying around. Try shooting the odd stone to reveal bonus items which add to your score. Various spooks and spectres walk and fly around the place. All of them are deadly and all deserve an energy ball in the mouth.

At the end of the level you encounter a silver Buddha. After passing the final confrontation of the level, you are magically transported by boat to the next.

Rowing gently through the underground river, you notice some pretty strange characters trying to shorten your life. There's also a huge fish that hides under the surface – until he sees you. Guide your boat carefully through the water, avoiding the mines and aiming for the waterfalls which speed you up. At the end of the level... another Buddha (weird, eh?).

The third level takes you into Hades itself. The graphics are suitably red and hot, with innumerable fire pits, slimy eyeballs and other distasteful beings floating around the place. Things start to get more difficult now as the platforms start to float and fire balls go shooting through the sky. Another Buddha awaits you at the end of the level, preventing access to a further two satanic sections.

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Large, bold sprites make the game fun to play. The scenery is well drawn and detailed enough to be recognised as the bowels of hell. A tune plays throughout the game behind a small array of simplistic (for the Engine) sound effects.

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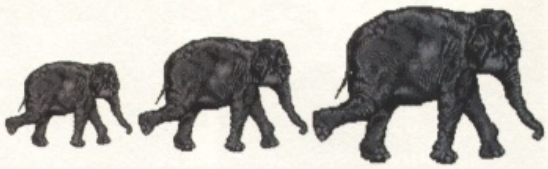
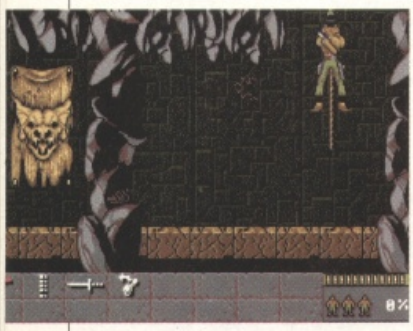
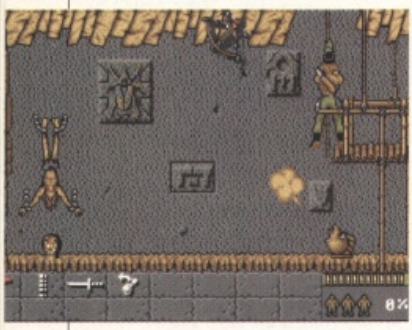


GOLD OF THE AZTECS

KINETICA/US GOLD ■ ARCADE ADVENTURE

Always looking to make a fast buck, Les Ellis straps on a pistol and goes in search of gold...





Four hundred years ago, a tribe of people called the Aztecs ruled South America. These warriors combined their incredible strength with the genius of their chiefs to become one of the most powerful races of people that have roamed the world. At the time, South America was rich in gold and the Aztecs used its value to gain power and riches beyond present day comprehension. Eventually, though, they became victims of their own wealth, and were swallowed up by their own greed, reverting to the simple beings they once sought to conquer. But their legend lives on...

Even now, intrepid explorers go in search of the Aztecs' wealth, risking unimaginable danger in their pursuit of untold riches. The Aztecs, however, were not stupid and had protected their gold so to prevent future explorers from gaining easy access to it. If somebody wanted to get the gold, they would have to overcome many puzzles, pass deadly traps and find their way through the thickest of jungles. The things Boy's Own stories are made of.

As you sit in your plane contemplating your destiny, a man comes over and taps on your shoulder. "Your stop, bwana." The native of the land leads you over to an open door in the side of the plane, hands you a parachute and pushes you out. As you wrestle with the parachute, the ground gets closer and closer. But it's too late, you manage to release the 'chute, but fail to find a clearing, instead landing in a tree. So out with your trusty sword and cut yourself down. As you hit the deck, you take your first look around – jungles can be depressing places...

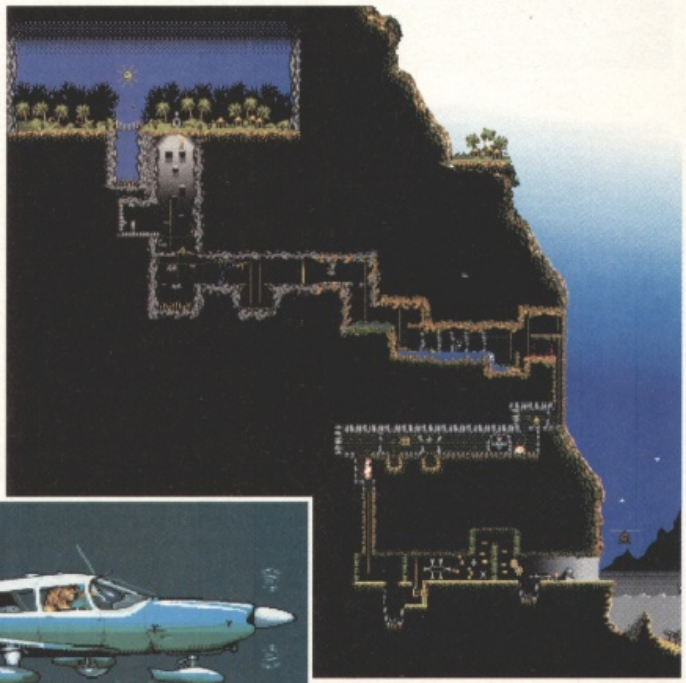
Before you've had time to acclimatise, loads of little guys arrive blowing poisoned darts at you – not the sort of welcome you expect after a British Airways flight. But the tribes of ugly natives don't take too kindly to being disturbed by greedy treasure hunters. So get your gun out and blow the little suckers up.

If you follow the jungle trail far enough – and if you don't get stomped on by marauding elephants – you'll come to a village. As well as various buildings, you'll discover a secret doorway that leads to the underground, a very nasty place even for an experienced adventurer like you.

Below ground, the adventure turns into a platform game. It's best to leap around as if your life depends on it – because it does. The dirt-dwellers are very protective of their gold, indeed, the remains of other not-so-intrepid-now explorers litter the ground.

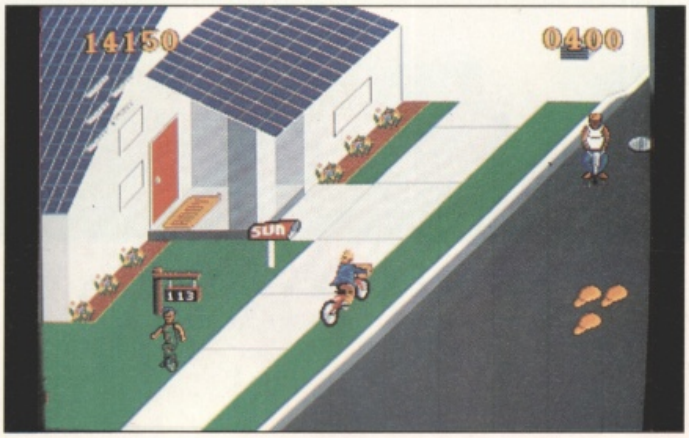
Ropes hang from the ceiling and are by far the best way of exploring the underground while avoiding its inhabitants. But watch what you grab hold of, because snakes can often be seen ascending ropes. Also, keep your head down, rocks can just drop out of the scenery dazing any unwary adventurer, or bats jump out of the walls, trying to make you their lunch time snack.

As you venture deeper and deeper you'll come across underground rivers, fire traps, and even a tomb (no adventure would be complete without one). Further down, the problems get even worse with the discovery that the Aztecs left some mechanical devices behind them. These devices are devious traps to



■ The map details your treacherous journey through jungle, underground cavern and lake. It's a long and winding path to freedom, but get all the way through and you're whisked back to civilization with all the gold you can carry.

■ Chocks away, Charlie... Before starting your mission a neat sequence shows you parachuting from a plane.



■ Amiga screenshot

PAPERBOY

MINDSCAPE ■ COIN OP CONVERSION

Remember the fuss when *Paperboy* was first converted to home computer? No, neither can I – it was that long ago. Incredibly, the game has been in the Gallup software charts under one guise or another almost since it was released.

The basic idea, for those not in the know, is to ride a bike along the street or pavement throwing newspapers into the mailboxes of the people who subscribe to the paper. Naturally people tend to object if you throw the papers through the window, on the porch or in the garage. However, non-subscribers to your paper are asking for a smashed window.

Various obstacles like kids on scooters, dogs and cars must be avoided. failure to do so will result in a buckled wheel and a cracked head.

People who don't get their newspaper delivered in the proper fashion are liable to cancel it, so be careful where you chuck the papers. Bonus points can be scored for hitting other targets like bins and gravestones.

When you finish the day's deliveries there is a short obstacle course in which you can score bonus points for accurate paper throwing and skillful bike riding.

RATINGS

AMIGA 86%

£24.95
OUT 10/90

The large characters make the game more involving and a lot easier to relate to. Backgrounds, too, are bright, detailed and utterly, utterly impressive in places (especially the elephants). The underground network is just crying out to be mapped, ensuring long-lasting gameplay. The music is an atmospheric Mexican drum tune, and while not obtrusive it can be turned off if so desired.

ATARI ST 81%

£24.95
OUT 10/90

Gameplay is just as good the Amiga version. However, the sound is less impressive and the graphics lack colour. Animation of the numerous characters is fantastically smooth and accurate, but rather slothful. An impressive game by any standards.

which complex solutions have to be found.

You get three lives and when you lose these you are treated to a gross death screen. You score is calculated on a percentage basis, just like that other great jungle adventure *Sabre Wulf*.

Don't forget, there's gold in them thar hills, and the lucky adventurer that finds it will get a free helicopter ride back to civilisation.

RATINGS

GAME BOY 89%

£26
OUT NOW

Excellent. Well worth getting.

THE AMAZING SPIDERMAN

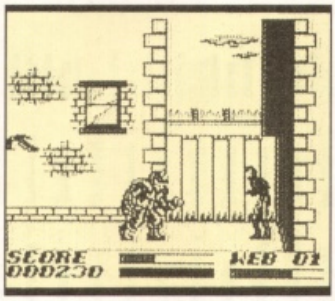
ENTERACTIVE ■ PLATFORM BEAT-'EM-UP

While the web slinger was out doing his deeds one day, a bunch of mutants decided they were going to get at him. The hell-spawn creatures decided the easiest way to do this would be to kidnap his wife and make some nasty demands of him. Spidey was about to embark on his mercy mission when he realised he wasn't married. In the end he decided 'what the heck' and went after the bad guys.

The mutants queue up to take you on. Each level is packed with hoards of bad guys with the mutant waiting at the end. You can deal with the villains by either kicking, punching or using your webs.

Mutants are tougher to handle and get worse the further you progress. There's the Hobgoblin, Mysterio, Dr Octopus and a smattering of other Marvel characters you love to hate.

The action occurs in alley ways, on the sides of buildings, in buildings and in the sewers. Beat all these nasties and you get to rescue your beloved, Mary Jane. Altogether now, ahhhhh.



■ **Spider-Man, Spider-Man does whatever a spider can. Spins a web any size... there goes the Spider-Man.**

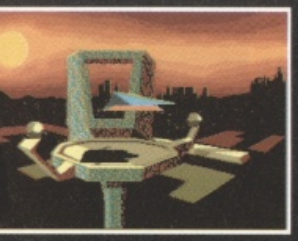
RATINGS

GAME BOY 68%

£26
OUT NOW

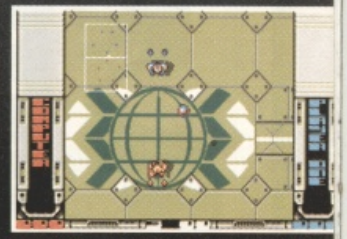
Some nice graphical effects, but limited gameplay.

THE RAZE RELEASE RUNDOWN

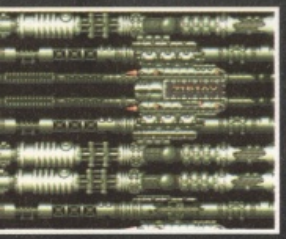


The definitive guide to what's out now, and what will be following soon.

Game	Producer	Amiga	Atari ST	IBM PC	Atari Lynx	Game Boy	Master System	Mega Drive	NES	PC Engine	Game type
Air Attack 44	Sega							£29.99 9/90			5
Anarchy	Psyclapse	£19.95 out now	£19.99 out now								5
Apprentice	Rainbow Arts	£19.99 out now	£19.99 out now								1
Armour-geddon	Psygnosis	£24.99 end of Sept	£24.99 end of Sept								5
Atomic Robokid	Activision	£24.99 October	£24.99 October								9
Awesome	Psygnosis	£34.99 October									9
Back to the... II	Imageworks	£24.99 out now	£19.99 out now	£24.99 out now							9
Batman	Ocean/Sunsoft	£24.99 out now	£19.99 out now		£tba tba	£34.95 out now	£29.95 end Sept	£34.95 out now	£29.95 out now	£34.95 October	10
Battlemaster	Millennium	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now	£29.99 out now							
Battletech 2	Activision US			£tba October							11
Betrayal	Rainbird	£29.99 October	£29.99 October	£34.99 October							11+12
Blade Warrior	Imageworks	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now							11
Block Out	Rainbow Arts			£24.99 out now							8
Bug Bash/Nucleus	Microtech	£12.99 October									9
Carthage	Psygnosis	£24.99 October	£19.99 October								9
Chase HQ	Ocean/Sega	£24.99 out now	£19.99 out now					£29.99 out now		£34.99 out now	13
Codename: Iceman	Sierra	£39.99 out now	£tba tba								2
Colonel's Bequest	Sierra	£39.99 out now	£34.99 out now	out now							2
Damocles	Novagen	£24.95 out now	£24.95 out now								11+5
David Wolf	Dynamix			£39.99 out now							11+12
Days of Thunder	Mindscape	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now							13
Devil Crash	Naxat									£34.99 out now	12+3
Dungeon Master	FTL/Mirrorsoft	£29.99 out now	£29.99 out now	£39.99 out now							7
Eco Phantoms	Electronic Zoo	£24.99 October	£24.99 November								5
EWSAT	Sega							£34.95 out now			9
F-14 Tomcat	Activision			£tba November							4
Faces	Spec. Holobyte			£tba 78%							8
Falcon Miss. Disk 2	Mirrorsoft	£19.99 out now	£19.99 out now								4
Final Battle	Imageworks	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now								9
Flood	Electronic Arts	£19.99 out now	£19.99 out now								10
Football 2	Gamestar			£tba October							3
Future Basketball	Hewson	£24.99 October	£24.99 October								3
Games People Play	Mindscape			£34.99 out now							15
Gold of the Aztecs	US Gold	£24.99 October	£24.99 October								1



Gold of the Aztecs	US Gold	£24.99 October	£24.99 October							1
Harley Davidson	Mindscape	£24.99 76%	£24.99 70%	£29.99 82%						13
Hell Explorer	Taito								£34.95 out now	10
Heroes	Domark	£29.99 out now 82%	£29.99 out now 82%							15
Infestation	Psygnosis	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now						11+12
Int. Soccer Chall.	MicroStyle	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now	£29.99 out now						3
Kaiser – Lux. Edit.	Linel	£49.95 tba	£49.95 tba							11
Killing Game Show	Psygnosis	£24.99 out now								5+11+12
Manix	Millennium	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now							11+12
Matrix Marauders	Psyclapse	£19.99 out now	£19.99 out now							8
Meganoid Const. Kit		Direct October	£3.99							8+12
Murder	US Gold	£19.99 out now	£19.99 out now							1+11
Necronom	Linel	£24.99 out now								12
Nitro	Psygnosis	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now							12
Oils Well	Sierra			£tba October						11
Operation Spruance	Parsec	£24.95 out now	tba tba	£24.95 out now						1
Operation Stealth	US Gold	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now							4
Paradroid 90	Hewson	£24.99 October	£24.99 October							11+12
Punisher	The Edge/MProse	£19.99 October	£19.99 October	£tba October						9
RC Grand Prix	Sega						£29.99 out now			14
Rick Dangerous II	MicroProse	£24.99 October	£24.99 October	£24.99 October						1
R. Smith's Cricket	Challenge	£tba out now	£tba out now							3+11
Rough and Ready	Hi-Tec	£6.99 out now	£6.99 out now							10
Shadow of the Beast II	Psygnosis out now	£34.95 out now	£34.95							1
Shadow Warriors	Ocean	£24.99 out now	£19.99 out now							6
Simulcra	MicroProse	£24.99 October	£24.99 October							5+11
Slimeworld	Epyx				£34.95 October					1
Snooker	Activision	£tba October	£tba October							3
Spellbound	Psyclapse	£19.99 October	£19.99 October							12
Spider-Man	Enteractive					£24.95 October				10+6
Super Monaco GP	Sega						£29.95 out now	£34.95 out now		14
Super Star Soldier	Kaneco								£29.99 out now	5
Thunderstrike	Millennium	£24.99 out now	£24.99 out now	£29.99 out now						11+5
Time Machine	Activision	£24.99	£24.99							1+11
Tracon II	Mindscape			£44.99 out now						11
Ultima V	Mindscape	£29.99 out now		£29.99 out now						7
UMS II	Rainbird	£29.99 out now	£29.99 out now	£34.99 out now						11
War Jeep	MicroStyle	£24.99 October	£24.99 October							9
Web of Terror	Impressions		£19.99 out now							11+12
Welltris	Infogrames	£24.99 out now								8
Wings	Cinemaware	£29.99 October								1
Xiphos	Electronic Zoo	£tba October	£tba October	£tba October						11+5
Ziriax	Whiz Kidz	£19.95 out now								5

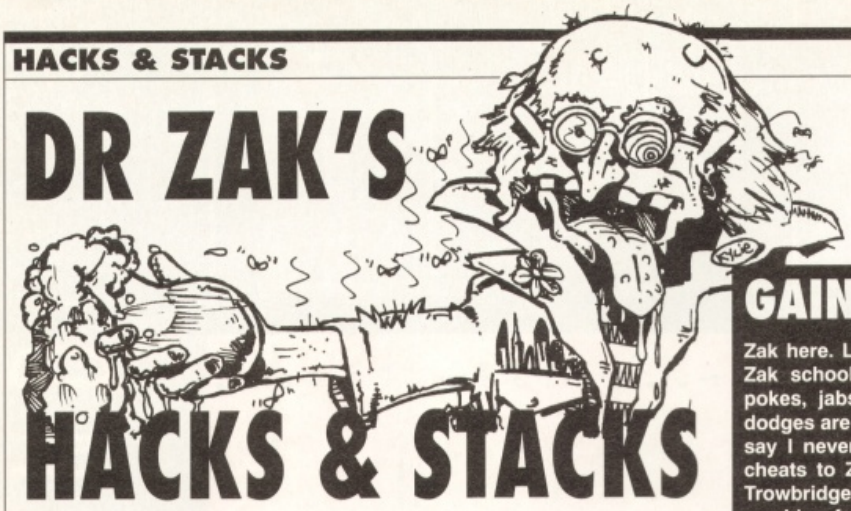


NUMBER KEY:

1 – Arcade Adventure
2 – Adventure
3 – Sports simulation
4 – Flight simulation
5 – Shoot-'em-up
6 – Beat-'em-up
7 – Roleplaying
8 – Puzzle
9 – Arcade action
10 – Arcade platform
11 – Strategy
12 – Arcade
13 – Driving simulation
14 – Arcade simulation
15 – Compilation

Please note: Release information is constantly changing. We believe the information to be correct but cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies. If in doubt, contact the software house direct.

DR ZAK'S HACKS & STACKS



GAIN A GAGGLE OF GAMES *

Zak here. Listen, you cunning contributors to truth, justice and the Zak school of insanity: tips, tactics, maps, game busting ploys, pokes, jabs, prescriptions, underhand dodges and other devious dodges are required. Don't rely on me; I won't always be here – some say I never have been, but what do they know? Simply get your cheats to ZAK'S HACKS & STACKS, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8LH. The best tip received for each machine format (Amiga, Atari ST, PC, Mega Drive, Sega, Nintendo, Lynx, Game Boy, PC Engine...) wins the sender a fabulous game for his or her machine.

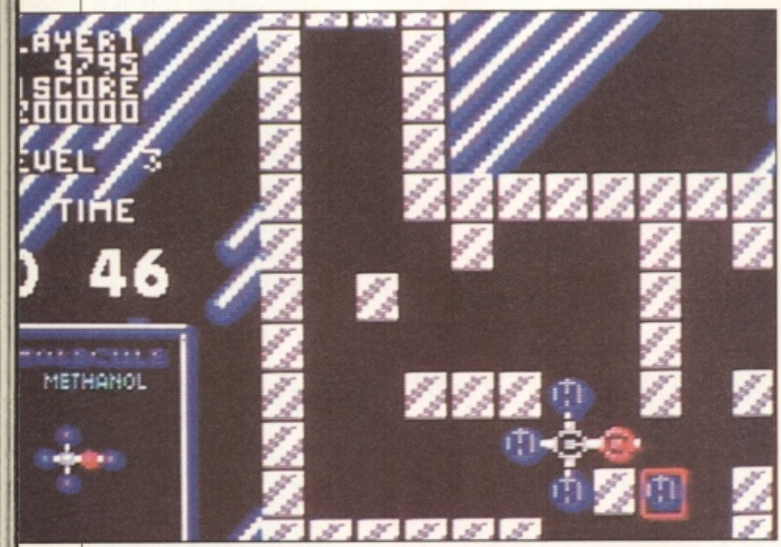
*** And a check up from the neck up free!**

It's mad! The whole game busting world has gone totally insane. And who's leading the crusade? None other than me... err, that's Doctor "call me mad" Zak. Tips have arrived from far and wide this month, so without further ado, it's over to you, no, me...

ATOMIX

All Formats

There rarely comes a game that is both original *and* interesting. Most games are just old ideas under new guises. Eventually everyone gets fed up with these tried and tested genres. It's at times like these that games such as *Atomix* breathe new life into the marketplace. It is very rare that a game requiring a high degree of thought, concentration and skill can become popular. *Atomix*, by Thalion (and distributed in the UK by Grandslam before they folded), has proved that it is possible. The game is wonderfully addictive and contains more than its fair share of strategic elements. It's one of those games that you know you can complete – but you never actually do. And that's exactly why *Atomix* has been chosen for the RAZE tip treatment... Move along, Mr Atomix, Doctor Zak is waiting in the surgery.



Level one is by far the easiest level to complete – only time is against you. This molecule can be placed almost anywhere on the screen.

Level two is slightly harder, there are less places on the screen that will accommodate the molecule. If you look at the screen, you'll probably see that there are other places where the molecule could be formed, but it is much easier to complete it the RAZE way!

Level three is much easier than it looks. Just leave the molecules in roughly the same place they originally appear and you should be okay (famous last words).

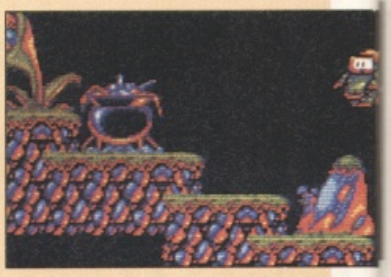
Level four is where the game begins to get harder. If you have a look at the guide you will note how we actually completed the level. Nearly all of the molecules rebound or play some part in the positioning of another molecule.

Level five can be really hard, especially if it's the first time you've been on this level. There is only one place on the screen where the molecule can be placed, unfortunately it does require quite a bit of thought and effort to finish the level. If you look towards the bottom left-hand side of the screen, you can see an enclosed area, this is where the molecule must be made. It is required that all the molecules are moved to this area before building can commence. After several attempts, you finally reach a point where the molecule looks half correct.

Always decide exactly where you wish the molecules to be placed before actually moving them. Plan where you wish to assemble the molecules then work out how you are going to get them there. When you've decided, move them bit by bit, don't try to do them all at once because you'll only get confused.

FLOOD

All Formats



After many hours of hacking, Kingswinford-based Peter Christian has managed to come up with the codes for all 42 levels. You're deranged, pal! Anyone spending hours hacking needs a check up.

1. FROG
2. YEAR
3. QUIF
4. LONG
5. WORD
6. FRED
7. WINE
8. GRIP
9. TRAP
10. THUD
11. FRAK
12. VINE
13. JUMP
14. NILL
15. FOUR
16. GRIT
17. ZING
18. JING
19. LIDO
20. POOL
21. HATE
22. REED
23. LIME
24. QUID
25. WING
26. FLEE
27. GIGA
28. HEAD
29. LOOP
30. SING
31. JOUX
32. PINK
33. GOGO
34. LETS
35. QUAD
36. BRIL
37. EGGS
38. HENS
39. NAIL
40. SOUP
41. FOAM
42. MEEK

RAINBOW ISLANDS
Atari ST

Well, I reckon Dominic Traignor and Gary Kirkwood from Glasgow need a check up from the neck up for this crazy piece of connivance. Before selecting a credit, type in BJBJBJRS for hint A or LJLSLBLS for hint B. Once you've typed it in, press up. At the end of a round, build rainbows to the top righthand corner of the screen; keep going when you are off the screen. If you go high enough your points will go mad, stark ravin' mad. Barkin' looney mad, ha ha...

SHADOW OF THE BEAST
Amiga

Wait until the last title screen appears then hold down the joystick fire button and left mouse button until you have to change disk. See what happens. Christopher Tindale from County Durham, you're barmy – there's no way I'm doing that.

GAUNTLET II
All Formats

P Barton from Nounsley has got to be in need of a prefrontal leucotomy if he thinks this is a cheat. Pause the game for just over two minutes and you'll find that all the walls turn into exits. Nerd! It's a feature of the game. Still, for some it will be a life saver.

F19 STEALTH FIGHTER
PC

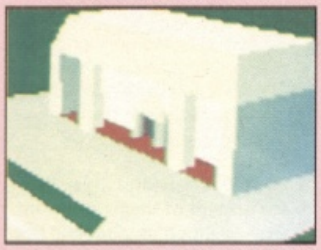
If you're finding it hard to rack up loads of points then J Caselton from London has a cheat that may just help. But I reckon most of you are incurable, so don't be optimistic. Make a backup of disk B, inserting the reserve disk when required. Because of the protection system used while loading disk B, the program will crash. The screen will go blank, but don't worry. Just press CTRL-C and you will see a picture of you getting out of your plane at the end of a mission. You've just completed one mission with maximum points. You can repeat this as many times as you wish, but remember, the cheat still uses the difficulty of the mission to work the score. So, missions set at difficulty ten will yield the best scores and medals, with terrific promotion prospects.

NINJA SPIRIT
Atari ST

Is it just me, or has everyone gone into a flippin' frantic frenzy? Why should I do as Julian Hellis from Restronguet and press F9 to pause the game, then press the control key to restart to gain infinite lives. I don't want to live forever... off with his head!

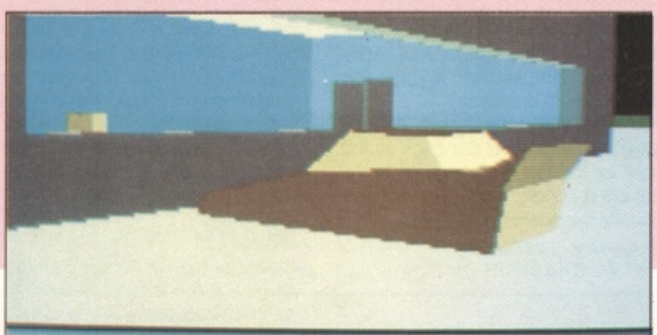
DAMOCLES
Amiga, Atari ST

Exposed like you've never seen before: Alex Barlow of London. Ahem, *Damocles*:



Triggers
1) Take the transporter from capital city (11-08) to Hanzem's new house at YR city (7-1), the trigger is the sideboard. To use the transporter, just go straight into the black box until you change location. You may not land at the right location first time, just keep on trying.
2) Take the plane to Snow Island, flying to the post office (9-2). The trigger is the cupboard.
3) Take the transporter to Chaldea Metropolis, heading onto the bank. Reading the receipt will tell you to go to the trading centre (5-6) where you can buy the next trigger, a hi-fi.
4) Fly to the Metis Moonbase on a dark red planet where you will find Nixon court (5-6). If you walk to the table inside, a door will open. The trigger is in the wash hand basin.

Object Location
A-Z Map (12-4) Post office, Capital City
Explosives (G-5) Hanzem Admin, Bare Island
Cup Plane (8-14) Capital City (Trade Centre)
Heat Suit (14-15) Power plant, Capital City
Pressure Suit (15-3) Capital City
Gold (5-6) Bank of Chaldea
Clip Board (9-2) Post Office, Snow Island
Piano (9-2) Ur City
Key E (3-14) Ur City
Prof's New House (7-1) Ur City
TV Control (3-7) Snow Island
Transporter (11-8) Capital Island
Book (13-15) Capital Island
Fridge (3-4) Snow Island
Bottle (6-4) Wine bar, Snow Island
TV Remote Control (3-7) Verlos Island
Video Machine (4-1) Verlos Island
Key B (6-5) Hanzem lab, Bear Island
Top Secret File (6-5) Hanzem lab, Bear Island
Thermal Undies (9-2) Snow Island
Photocopier (4-2) DHSS
Timed Detonator (6-2) Hanzem Sale



THE THREE STOOGES
Amiga, Atari ST, PC

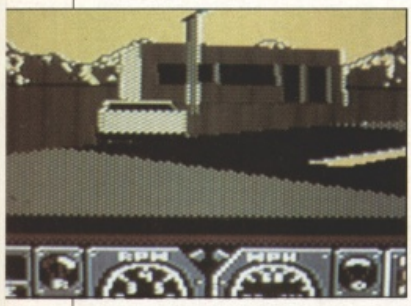
Another lad in need of a neck-up lobotomy is Geraint Michael from Whitchurch. Get this, he thinks he's gonna get a bonk crazy wad of paper for this tip. On the hospital stage, stay level with the nurse pushing the stretcher. This will clear a path for you to pass without crashing, therefore giving you loads of cash. It may well do, but you're not getting any cash, Geraint. Haw, haw, haw...

SIM CITY
Atari ST

Hold shift and type in MONEY for a free loan of $10,000 smackeroonies; keep going until you reach $89,000 big ones. Well that's a tad rude, P Booth from Doncaster.

SLAYER
All Formats

Here's a Dr Zak special tip for Hewson's *Slayer*. Get to the end of the first stage with only one life remaining. Yes, I did say one life, so start dying. Blow up the little green blobs and the enemy guns. Pay attention you goons or I fear a Zak attack! Chuck yourself into the machine and you can start level two with lots of lives.



HARD DRIVIN'

Amiga, Atari ST, PC

As you start to climb the hill, accelerate through the manual gears then – as you come over the brow – put the gear selector into neutral. You'll be able to drive round the track without skidding. Agggh! It's that crazy conniving charlatan, Geraint Michael from Whitchurch, again. Well, that's it from him... he's gone. Horrah!

ROCKET RANGER

Amiga, Atari ST

If you're like Chris White from Colchester, unbalanced, this complete solution to Mirrorsoft's mind-boggling game might save you from toppling over. And they say I'm non compos mentis (nuts). Bah!

First, go to the lunarium store and put all the lunarium in your jet-pack. Now go to the war room and move your men to Sudan, Congo, Kenya, East Africa and Arabia, telling them to organise resistance in low profile. If one of your agents has a report to make before you move him, apart from the one in Germany, read it. If he says there's nothing wrong then note down the country and bypass it. If, however, there's a desert or jungle base, move all your men there and tell them to organise some havoc, preferably of the low profile type.

Now go to these destinations, one after the other, and don't worry about Professor Barnstoff and his daughter.

Algeria, West Africa, Nigeria, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Congo, Kenya, East Africa, Arabia, Persia, Mid East, USSR, Scandinavia, England, Spain, France, Italy, Yugoslavia, Canada, USA, Venezuela, Columbia, Peru, Brazil, USA.

If you find a desert base, make sure you find the nearest country and fly there and back. The second time there will be more tanks and you will have to shoot more of them. Do the same with the jungle bases but go back to them twice. Never go to a desert base just after you see the Chapter 3 message or you'll be sent back to the USA.

When you get back to the USA, go to the war room and put all your agents into countries with lunarium bases in them, still organising resistance in low profile.

Beating up Guards

As soon as the screen changes from the text screen to the room with the guard, give him two upper cuts to the head straight away, then two or three body blows, then another couple of body and upper cuts whenever you get the chance.

Desert Bases

Get to the height where your bullets hit the ground as high as possible. It's best to keep over to the left side. As one of the tanks comes a third of the way down the screen in your direction, move out of the way – fast!

Goering's Planes

Before the planes come out, stay at the bottom of the screen, about a quarter of the way from the right and keep firing. They will not be able to get you as soon as they appear, just be patient. For the next wave, stay in the same place while holding down (and fire!).

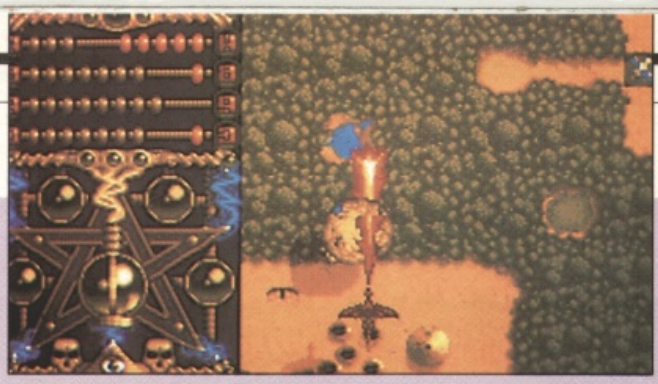
Women on the Moon

Move over to the far left and go up to the height of the women leader, who appears just to the right of you. As soon as she goes back up, move across to where she was. When she starts to move down, give it to her (!). Keep moving across to the right, simultaneously shooting at each of the women. Patience is the key.

Monsters on the Moon

Aim in the middle of the hole which appears on the text. Just keep shooting, this section is probably the easiest to complete.

If you still haven't got enough lunarium when you get back to the USA for the last time, go back to the desert or jungle base. The latter is usually the easiest.



DRAGON'S BREATH

Amiga, Atari ST

Master smeg 'ead PJ Gregg from Chipstead reckons he's done the business on *Dragon's Breath* – and by the looks of things he could just be telling the truth. Damn, I hate admitting anyone's done well. So, for that reason, he gets a trip on a tightrope to the terminal farm. Mad? Do you mean me?

MONTH ONE

Cast the following spell on dragon:
2 x rasgon-grind and heat
2 x churl-normal and heat
3 x arolig-normal, heat and 1/4 con dense
2 x mionacal-grind and condense
7 x haloros-cut and condense
7 x igele-normal and heat
2 x churl-normal and heat
1 x acrus-mix and heat

CHURL – A useful ingredient for growth of towns/dragons. Buy as much as possible taking egg costs into account.
HALOROS – Wisdom.
IGELE – Eyesight.
MIONACAL – Health (never use Fanveer).
AROLIG – Speed.
RASGON – Dragon director.
TIUS – Town director.
ACRUS – Power increaser.
CHIFE – Power decreaser.

Although this uses up a lot of ingredients, it makes your dragon unbeatable in a duel and devastating when attacking villages – it can kill over 1000 people in any one attack! The dragon will have full speed, strength, wisdom, eyesight and health.

Place two eggs in incubation on full heat. Look in books at ongoing battles, then record them on paper; now go to the map of Anrea. Send your dragon to a town with a population of about 900 on a conquer and keep mission (Hanmon/Olorn are good). Do not buy anything from traders yet. End your turn.

MONTH TWO

Go to the map of Anrea, then return dragon to the lair and inspect conquered villages and towns. Cast the following spell on town:
3 x tius-normal and heat
4 x churl-normal and heat
2 x acrus-grind and condense
1 x churl-normal and heat
This spell should make the village or town into a city with over 1000 inhabitants. If more churl is added then it will become even bigger, always remember to calm the mixture down if it becomes too potent; chife is very useful. Raise the taxes to full and repeat the spell if desired, perhaps twice. End your turn.

MONTH THREE

Forget about the city, it should grow without your help, sprouting towns all by itself. Meanwhile, send out your mega-dragon to beat up other towns. For example, if your city is at war with someone else, go and kill that village or town. If any town with a population greater than 1000 is at war, send your dragon on a return after task mission to conquer the enemies. The reward depends on how badly the enemy has been hit. With this dragon, the whole town is usually knocked out completely, with huge losses of life – sometimes the whole population is wiped out!

FOLLOWING MONTHS

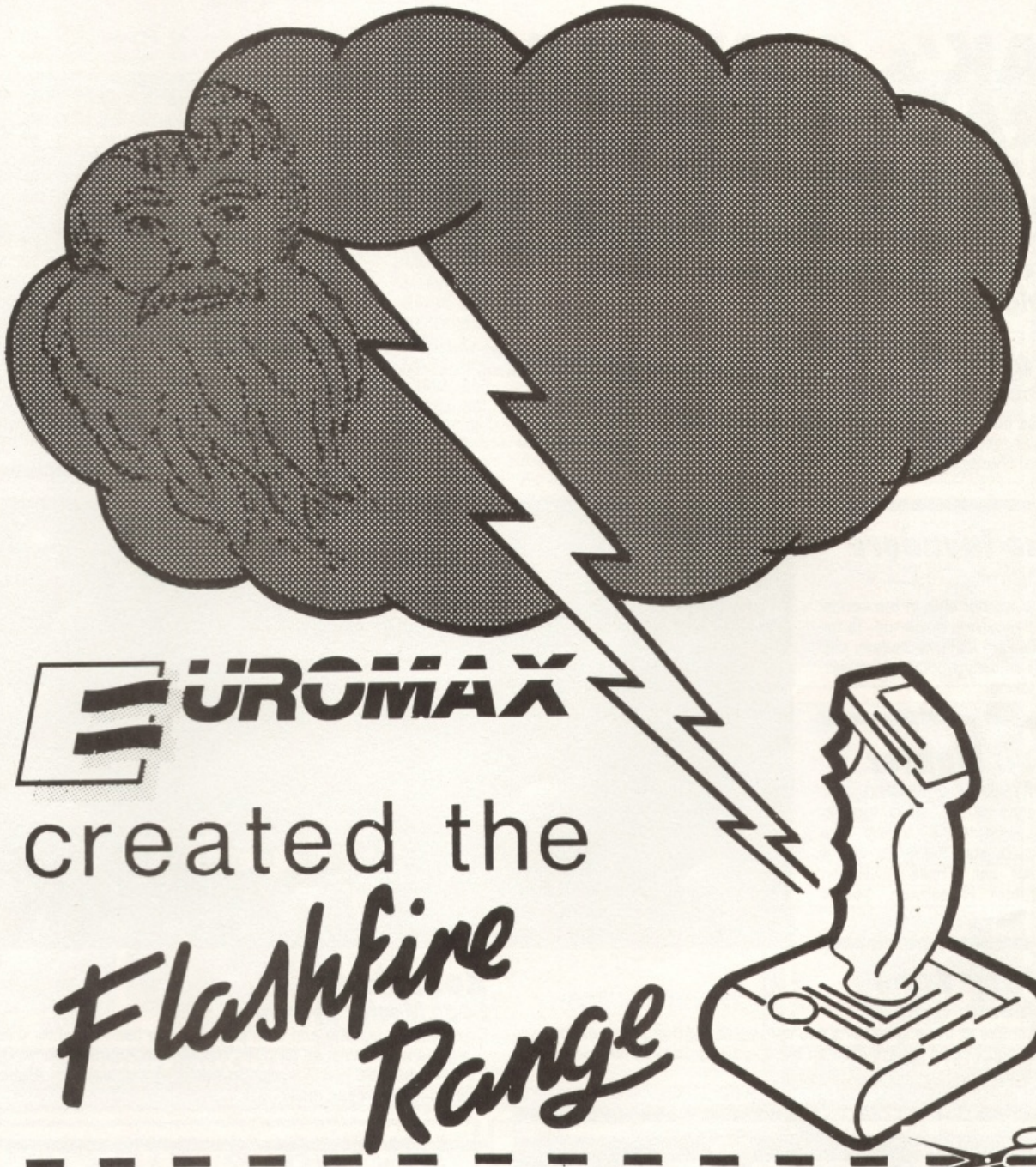
Once dragons have hatched, try to find a trader who can sell you the right ingredients for a mega-dragon. Keep using spells on new towns formed from the original, soon you could have as many as 30 tax-giving cities. It is possible to have an income of up to 1000 gelds per month. With this sort of income you're sailing. Watch the health of your dragons, and, unless you know of any good spells for eggs or humans, don't waste ingredients on them. Soon you should have an invincible army of eight mega-dragons. If you attack all the other towns, the other two players will be in trouble.

Although the training missions are easy, they are usually a waste of time. Just set the zeal to medium or high and you can easily remove an average village.

Never avoid other players' dragons as you can always beat the hell out of them and sometimes kill them – but keep your eye out for enemy dragons.

Soon you may well be able to buy ingredients in enormous quantities; your maximum is 99.

On the seventh day...



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ZAK's CONSOLE CRACK SHACK

Zak's back – but that's because he hasn't actually been anywhere – to deliver this month's devastating deranged dose of cunning console cheats, tips, maps, and prescriptions.

Mike Tyson's Punch Out
Nintendo

Get to the password screen and type in the code 246813579. You can now fight some rather weird characters. Look, Andy Scott from Stourbridge, the only weird character around here is you!

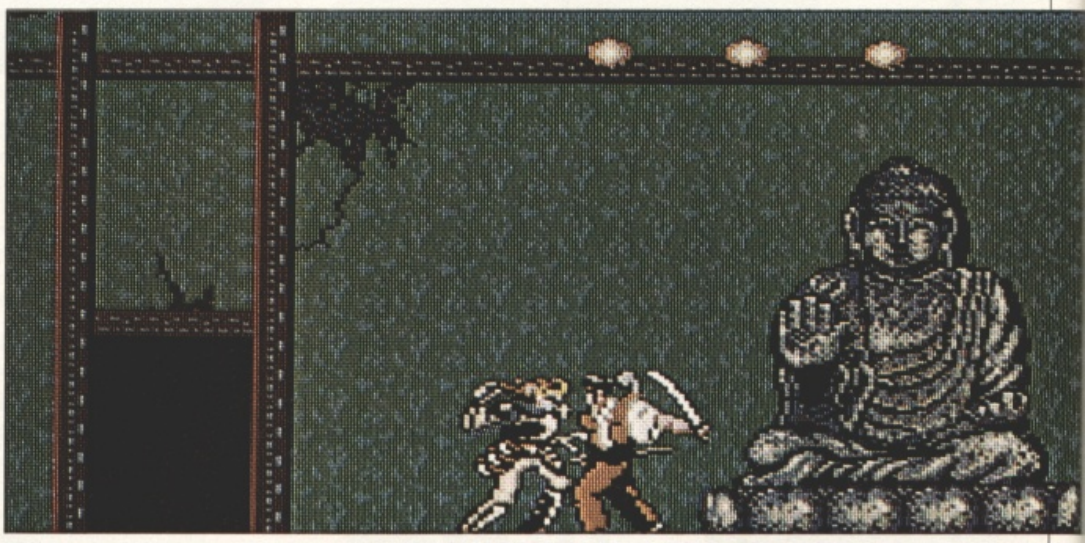
Bugs Bunny
Nintendo Game Boy

Oliver Case from Westbrook must be completely cracked to have come up with all the code levels for the game. Press SELECT during play to increase speed. Duh, what's up Doc?

2. SZWS	22. SYEZ	42. PZFW	62. PYCX
3. ZS2S	23. ZP4Z	43. YSJW	63. YPAX
4. ZZPS	24. ZY9Z	44. YZKW	64. YYOX
5. SW3S	25. W2RZ	45. PWMW	65. S3S2
6. SXES	26. WTFZ	46. PXCW	66. S1WZ
7. ZW4S	27. X2JZ	47. YWAW	67. Z3ZZ
8. ZX9S	28. XTKZ	48. YXOW	68. Z1PZ
9. WSRS	29. WPMZ	49. ZZSX	69. SE32
10. WZES	30. WYCZ	50. ZTWX	70. SHE2
11. XSJS	31. XPAZ	51. TZZX	71. ZE42
12. XZKS	32. XYOZ	52. TTPX	72. ZH92
13. WWMS	33. ZSSW	53. 2P3X	73. W3R2
14. WXCS	34. ZZWW	54. 2YEX	74. W1F2
15. XWAS	35. TSZW	55. TP4X	75. X3J2
16. XXOS	36. TZPW	56. TY9X	76. X1K2
17. S2SZ	37. 2W3W	57. P2RX	77. WEM2
18. STWZ	38. 2XEW	58. PTFX	78. WHC2
19. Z22Z	39. TW4W	59. Y2JX	79. XEA2
20. ZTPZ	40. TX9W	60. YTKX	80. XHO2
21. SP3Z	41. PSRW	61. PPMX	

Space Invaders
PC Engine

Shoot the mother ship in the centre and you'll receive a power-up. Ta for that tip William Duffy of Belfast; pity it doesn't actually work. Calm down, I'm only joking.

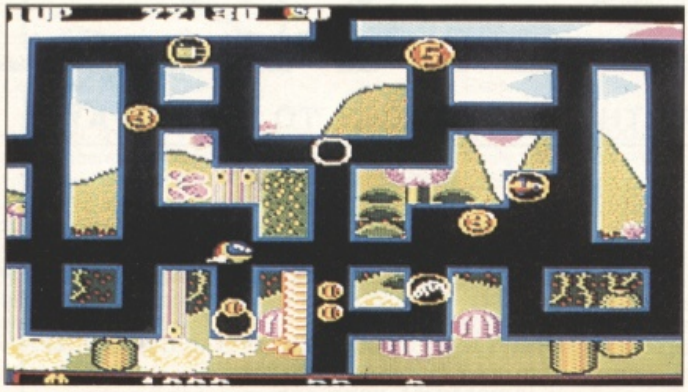


Action Fighter
Sega Master System

At the start of the game type in SPECIAL. include the full stop. This allows you to start the game with a bullet-proof car. That's it Steven Garbett from Halesowen, you've had your say.

Fantasy Zone
Sega Master System

If you purchase all the engine parts you can, you'll find that your weapons will never run out. I could do with that on my Skoda Rapide, James Hemmings from Swanage.



Kenseiden
Sega Master System

Climb the big buddha and then push up. You can now enter a secret screen. A big round of applause for John Rippin from Aberdeenshire. Not for the tip, it's because he's man enough to admit he comes from Aberdeen. Nothin' wrong with Aberdeen really.

Last Battle
Sega Megadrive

If you press down buttons A, B, C and START simultaneously, you will be presented with a screen that allows you to change the order of the levels within the game. What about the tip then Simon Fowler of Whitchurch. Oh that was it! Right fair enough, but just make sure you keep taking those little white tablets

Super Contra
Nintendo

During the title screen press the down, up, right, left, A, B, and start buttons. You'll find you've got 30 lives. Look, Paul Trowbridge from Nailsea, if you need 30 lives to complete this game, you'd better seek professional advice for your inferiority complex!

THE 1990 ATARI ST PRODUCT GUIDE

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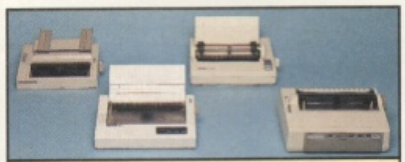
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Blue Lightning
Atari Lynx

Simon Hall from Chepstow has sent in the codes for all the levels on Blue Lightning. Thanks a lot.

1. AAAA
2. PLAN
3. ALFA
4. BELL
5. NINE
6. LOCK
7. HAND
8. FLEA
9. LIFE

Enduro Racer
Sega Master System

If you want to miss out levels, which Thomas Smerdon from Cateram obviously does, then just press reset on the title screen. Now press up, down, left and right in sequence on control pad one. Now you can choose which level you want to play on. Luverly jubbly.

Ghostbusters
Sega Master System

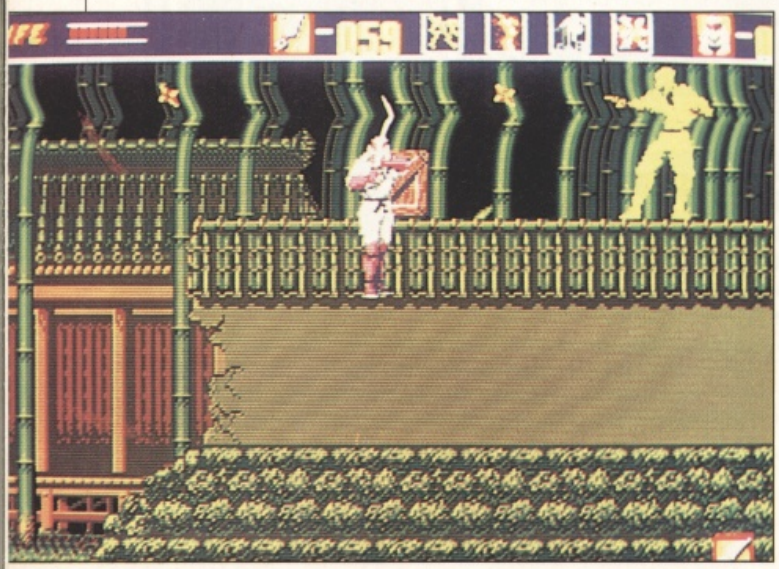
When you start the game select the password option. Enter the initials AA and the following code: 1173468723. You can now start the game with loads of dosh. Look Trevor "fabricator" Holborn from Frome, just cos you've got a turbocharged, fuel injected XR3i with a dangly dice on the rear-view mirror, don't expect me to believe a word you say.

After Burner II
Sega Megadrive

What a corker Jeremy Kingston from Sheffield has sent in. He reckons if you press buttons A, B, C and the START button simultaneously, you can select which stage you wish to start on. I reckon he's in desperate need of a cat-scan.

Shinobi
Sega Master System

Steven Garbett from Halesowen, you're unhinged! You're getting me into a wax. You state that by pushing the joypad down and holding button two from the title screen, it's possible to start on any level simply by rotating the joypad. What are you on? Barmy, cuckoo, delirious, nuts, rabid, unstable... Don't worry, Doctor Zak is here to help.



Altered Beast II
Sega Megadrive

When you're on the title screen press B and the START button to access the options screen. Justin Thomas from Brummy says you will be able to start at any level and choose any beats. Well put a spade on my head and call me dug!

Dragon Spirit
PC Engine

Keep pressing buttons 1 and 2 together until you hear a beep. When killed, you will be awarded numerous continues. Well I'll be damned Alex Ware from Cirencester, I can honestly say you're a few sandwiches short of a picnic.

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NEW! - AMIGA PACK

Commodore A500 Flight Of Fantasy

£399 INC VAT

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The Commodore A500 Batman Pack must surely rank as one of the most popular computer packs ever! The pack features the **Commodore Amiga 500 computer** with **mouse controller** and **TV modulator**, plus four top software titles. The software includes: **'Batman The Movie'** - Rid Gotham City of the cunning joker, in Ocean's top selling title based on the blockbuster Batman film; **New Zealand Story** - high quality conversion of the leading arcade game; **Interceptor** - Dogfight with two F-16's in this leading flight simulator; **Deluxe Paint II** - top quality Amiga graphics package which set the standard for others to follow. Return the coupon for further details.

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For the more serious or professional applications user, Commodore have a selection of systems based around the expandable Amiga 2000, at prices from £1295+VAT. The A2000 features a full 1Mb RAM (expandable to 9Mb), 9 system expansion slots, plus IBM compatibility with the use of PC-XT or PC-AT bridgeboards. Complete and return the coupon, putting a tick in the A2000 box, for details of A2000 computer systems.

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RAINBOW ISLANDS:

Slip on your magic shoes, practise throwing a rainbow and you're ready to go island hopping. From the Island of Doh to Monster Island, you will encounter Doh himself, stinging insects, lethal combat machines, mechanical assailants, the formidable beings of legend and folklore. Finally enter the world of darkness and its inhabitants.

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BUDGET BLITZ

Welcome, bona fide bargain bleeders, to the first ever Budget Blitz; your main man Derek da Mizer here. I know there's nothing worse than shelling out loads of wadericks on a game only to find it's rubbish. That's why each month I'll be covering every single budget and compilation release – it's my story and I'm sticking to it! For the def guide to the best cheeky cheapies around, pull up a pew and get a load of this...

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II

KLASSIX/EPYX

Returning for the second time is, tadaaa... the evil Elvin Atombender. The original *Impossible Mission* was released on the C64 over five years ago; the follow-up is a welcome addition to the budget market. In the sequel you yet again have to overthrow Elvin before the World is blown into squillions of tiny little bits.

You must explore Elvin's tower complex, checking each location for the various objects required to complete the game. Basically, the game is the old *Mission* with few additions. As a whole it's bigger, but whether it'll keep players of the original interested is debatable.

The graphics are smooth and colourful – just like the C64 game. Sound still contains the evil cackle and speech of Atombender welcoming you into his den. Despite being a re-release, it's still exciting and adds more than a sparkle to the present 16-bit budget range.

STAT ATTACK!

IMPOSSIBLE MISSION II
Klassix/Epyx
Versions: **Amiga, ST**
Price: **£9.99**
Available: **now**

AMIGA 78%
Graphics have changed little from computer to computer, so there's nothing new here. Sound is naturally better than the C64's.

ATARI ST 77%
Same as the Amiga. Except for the nobby sound – especially the sampled snippets – which grate gratuitously.

PUB TRIVIA SIMULATOR

CODE MASTERS

Everyone's seen one, almost everyone's played one. Only a few have beaten them. The pub trivia game is the single biggest phenomenon to hit local drinking establishments since Julian's lunch time jaunt with a ploughman's. It's not just in pubs you'll find them; they're all over the place: arcades, service stations and even fast food takeaways. The attraction is obvious: money. So why produce a computer version? Practice.

TRIVIA TALK
Q: How many medals did the Americans win at the 1980 Olympics?
A: None! The Americans weren't there!

Up to five players can take part, each starting with 10p. Each spin of the reels costs you a similar amount, so it's imperative you progress onto the money maze quickly as that's where most of the cash is to be made.

To reach the money maze you must first complete the preliminary section. This contains a pyramid of cards, each holding its own question; five cards at the bottom, four on the next level, and so on, until you finally answer the top card and progress the money maze.

The money maze also contains a pyramid, with cash prizes behind each card, increasing as you progress up the pyramid. On completion of the money maze, you are returned to the first pyramid. The questions aren't that easy, and it can take ages to just progress up the first pyramid – never mind getting any money from the maze. Still, once you've got some cash, the rest is just plain sailing.

With over 2000 questions, it should

■ **Choose your player carefully. How these suckers got into the game is anyone's guess.**

EASY MONEY

Talk about easy money! This man actually earns a living playing trivia machines, perhaps raking in £30 to £40 per hour! Staggering isn't it? It's therefore no surprise that he's been banned from various pubs and clubs for winning too much. Mind you he's pretty intelligent; a university degree puts him in good stead, although anyone with a sharp memory could do equally well. As you might have guessed, we weren't allowed to reveal Frome-based Jason Holborn's name or whereabouts.

ALL TIME CLASSICS
Accolade

You can depend on Accolade to come out with a decent sports simulation every now and then, so it's hardly surprising a whopping compilation containing past successes should appear. *All Time Classics* contains three sports specials and a tank simulation (which looks a tad out of place).

Serve & Volley

Serve & Volley is fairly self-explanatory, and slips you into the sweaty trainers of a professional tennis player desperate for success and stardom. To progress to the top of the world rankings you must play a variety of opponents on a range of surfaces. There are also three venues – centre court, seaside and country club (for private use) – and a variable number of sets per match.

As each match is won, your playing statistics improve, with your speed, endurance, shot skill and power being recorded. It is essential to practise regularly, as an opponent with better stats is always more likely to beat you than you beating him. This makes the game a real haul, but the large amount of attributes compensates for this, with the challenge suitable for all players. It's interesting to note that the game is viewed side-on, a pleasant change from the end-on views of *3-D International Tennis* and *Match Point*.

TKO

You could have been a contender – if you'd bought *TKO* when it was first released a couple of years ago. But due to its re-package you'll be able to have another shot at becoming the champion.

During your career you'll encounter all types of fighters – sluggers, bleeders, brawlers and conventional boxers – but only one can be called champ. As a total unknown, a dark horse, you have to make your mark (literally) on the boxing world and become champ in one season.

STAT ATTACK!

ALL TIME CLASSICS
Accolade
Versions: **IBM PC (£29.99), Amiga (£24.99), Atari ST (£24.99), C64 (£14.99/£17.99), Spectrum (£14.99)**
Available: **9/90**

IBM PC 72%
A good package containing a wide range of game styles. Graphics are of an acceptable standard, although not up to VGA. Sound is poor and there's no support for sound cards.

be quite a while before any are repeated. Graphics and sound, which only need to be functional in such games, are just that.

STAT ATTACK!

PUB TRIVIA SIMULATOR
Code Masters
Versions: **Amiga, ST**
Price: **£4.99**
Available: now

AMIGA 72%
Has most of the elements of the original. Despite the lack of *real* money handouts, there's a competitive spirit created with the multi-player options.

ATARI ST 68%
Runs a tad slooooower than the Amiga version, but otherwise virtually identical.

After selecting your fighter, you must also choose his guard position, be it to the head, chin, throat, chest or stomach. Different boxers prefer to aim at different areas so watch out for those low punches. If and when you do finally become the champion, you will be awarded the Accolade Boxing Federation championship belt.

Rack 'Em

The last of the sports games is based around the old pub game, pool. *Rack 'Em* features all the usual pool characteristics, including two-player options. Although not up to the ground-breaking standards of *3-D Pool* or *Steve Davis Snooker*, *Rack 'Em* is a welcome addition to the bundle.

WORLD SOCCER
ZEPPLIN

Isn't this one rather late? The World Cup has been and gone. It's ironic that the top-selling football game of the period was actually an unlicensed sequel, *Kick Off 2*.

Amazingly, *World Soccer* has absolutely nothing to do with the

A Cuban football referee was executed by the Cuban Mafia because he gave a penalty against the Mafia's favourite side.

World Cup; there's no mention of Gazza (not even a sachet containing a tear droplet), no wall poster with a picture of Maradona using his prolific hand, and no crowd waves. Thankfully the game steers well clear of the on-the-pitch type games – *Kick Off 2* has that well sewn up – and sticks to the tried and tested managerial side. Boring, you may well say, but *Football Manager* has sold well over half a million copies, and other games in the genre have a loyal and vociferous following. Most people have at least one in their collection – you either love 'em or loathe 'em.

The game still has the old four divisions, but being *World Soccer*, they're full of continental teams like Atlanta and Real Madrid. Like true soccer, these teams perform significantly better than the poorer teams; Real Madrid would have no trouble thrashing Newcastle.

You start with £50,000 in your bank account, so it's best to spend the first couple of seasons building up a strong side (or going on large lager frenzies) – the best players cost over £100,000. Without such a team you don't really have any chance winning the league, let alone the cup.

Winning a cup match can increase your bank account by £400,000.

The fact that you start with a decrepit team makes *World Soccer* a really hard slog, but that's a fresh change from the usual managerial games which are often finished in a day.

■ Superb game. Like the Amstrad version, the game's addictive and playable.

STAT ATTACK!

WORLD SOCCER
Zepplin
Versions: **Amstrad, Spectrum**
Price: **£2.99**
Available: **now**

Amstrad 81%
You can't do a lot better than this. The graphics are acceptable and the sound's fine. More importantly, the game structure is just right: challenging and addictive.

Spectrum 73%
Only the graphics let down an otherwis

Steel Thunder

This is undoubtedly the odd one out of the group. The tank simulation received favourable reviews when it was released last year, and held its head high amongst the glut of similar games that also came out at that time. The game is based around a range of sophisticated tanks, including the M1A1 Abrams and the M3 Bradley, and contains some awesome weaponry.

The many missions included in the package all require exact tank control and a good knowledge of the systems incorporated on your chosen tank. Despite being a strange inclusion in the quartet, *Steel Thunder* is a great strategy game, and very addictive.

PRO GOLF SIMULATOR

CODE MASTERS

Despite the glut of golf releases over the years, few have compared to the original *Leaderboard*.

Screen designers have become the accepted way to improve on the original golf games. This element alone makes *Pro Golf* suitable for all types of player. If the game's too easy or difficult then just change the holes.

The game provides five options from the title screen: course practice, putting green, compete, design or help. Practice is vital, so the first two options are very welcome (remember, arms straight and don't bend those wrists – Warren, you haven't a hope). While putting is very straightforward, the main driving range requires a bit more concentration. From the tee, you can zoom around the hole, checking out terrain and distance. As you prepare to swing, choose the correct club, take the wind speed and direction into consideration, then try your luck. You'll play a shot and find yourself in the middle of nowhere, bedazzled as to which club you should use (lucky you're still in practice mode)! Once mastered,

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you're onto the full course where up to four players can compete.

After tiring of the included holes, there's the exhaustive icon-driven design screen to putt up with. You can either edit the original layouts or design some of your own. In fact, great fun can be had if you can get hold of some course maps – you could even simulate playing at your own club. Imagine a quick round on St Augusta minus the £250 fee!

All the course hazards and clubs work like the real things. Sure, the game isn't as good as *Leaderboard* (which is also available at a budget price), but it makes a worthy and fresh alternative.

STAT ATTACK!

PRO GOLF SIMULATOR
Code Masters
Versions: **Amstrad, Spectrum**
Price: **£2.99**
Available: **now**

Amstrad 68%
Loses it's addictability because certain areas of the game are much harder to master than others. The sound is nothing special, fortunately the graphics more than make up for this.

Spectrum 65%
An uninspiring game, only rescued by the useful course designer. Surely monochromatic graphics have been over used on the Spectrum – it's time for something new?

HEROES

DOMARK

Featuring four suitably heroic hard guys who were all popular in their previous forms at full price, the Heroes compilation is one hell of a hard hitter. The featured tough guys are Arnold Schwarzenegger, James Bond, Luke Skywalker and the Barbarian (just think of Conan the Barbarian... make that busty Maria Whitaker). Of the four games, only *Star Wars* is very old (about three years), the others are all relatively recent successes.

Licence to Kill was produced by Domark to tie in with the Bond film of 1989. The game has you in JB's bottle, tracking down and destroying the evil drug smuggler Sanchez. The action consists of three levels with various game types incorporated into each of the scenes. It closely follows the film, which shows why it was the best received of the Bond games.

Barbarian II should be familiar. The game has most of the hack 'n' slash elements of the original, but features more adventure and a wider range of opponents. There are three levels which culminate in a confrontation with your old enemy, Drax.

If you haven't seen the film of *The Running Man* yet, check it out. The game on the other hand is a completely different matter. Okay, so there's a pretty impressive title sequence, but the basic game is split into four very samey levels – you run along beating up dogs and guards. On its own it's naff, but in its supportive role in the compilation it's passable.

Star Wars is probably the best game of the package. As good today as when it first came out.

STAT ATTACK!

HEROES
Domark
Versions: **Amiga, Atari ST, Commodore 64, Amstrad CPC, Spectrum**
Price: **£29.99 (Amiga/ST), £19.99 (C64/CPC/+3 disk), £14.99 (C64/CPC/Spectrum tape)**
Available: **now**

Amiga 83%
All the games in the compilation have excellent graphics, good sound and sport a high standard of gameplay. Well worth the £30.

BUDGET BITS

Fight your way single-handedly through hordes of enemy troops, assaulting each of the four areas for £4.99 on ST or Amiga courtesy of Code Masters. You come up against various enemies, including paratroopers, commandos and mercenaries. Move quickly and quietly, and remember... Who Dares *SAS Combat Simulator* Wins.

Introducing the latest in personal transportation, The Foourd T-Bird®©™etc (capable of 0 to 600 in 5.6 seconds and a maximum speed of 1346 mph). This bird's equipped with a revolutionary ABS system – and it needs it! Strangely enough, the game itself has very little to do with the above scenario. Your mission is to fight off the hordes of attacking aliens, picking up the various weapons and bonuses along the way. T-Bird is available from Mastertronic; priced £4.99 on the ST and Amiga, and £2.99 on the C64 and Spectrum.

Take control of an infinitely powerful powerboat and go for gold in CodeMasters' *Pro Powerboat Simulator*. The aim is to complete each stage as fast as possible while trying to dodge various traps set en route. There are plenty of things like extra fuel and bonus flags to pick up. Put down £4.99 and you can pick up a copy for your ST or Amiga.

One to look out for next month will be Domark's latest collection, *TNT*. The games included in this explosive anthology are *APB, Dragon Spirit, Xybots, Toobin'* and *Hard Drivin'* – all originally produced in the arcades by Tengen. You can check out the package on all major formats, and it should be available just in time for Christmas.

Digital Integration, who have previously confined their pursuits to the full-price market producing a whole range range of vehicle simulations, are entering the budget arena next month with a trio of cheap re-releases. *Targhan* is a slice 'n' dice game of immense proportions. *Fast Lane*, on the other hand, passed the public buy without much of a fuss – albeit with some good reviews hailing it 'the *Pole Position* of 1989'. Lastly, *On Safari* sets the player down in the middle of a jungle, armed only with a camera!

TERRY PRATCHETT

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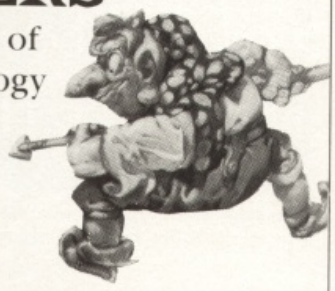
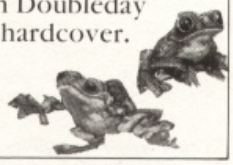


WINGS

The hilarious third and final part of the nome trilogy.

In Doubleday hardcover.



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PD FREE

PD software isn't just about boring utilities — search hard enough and you'll find a wealth of quality games. Jason Holborn turns out his pockets and finds a few quid to spend

Everyone knows what public domain software is by now – after all, you've probably read endless magazine columns telling you how great PD software is. But why do those articles make it sound so unbearably boring? After all, who really wants to know about programs that stream bytes to logical devices while spooling this and that to that and the other? Not bloomin' me, that's for sure!

Time for some good news. The PD libraries are also a damned good source for freebie games and games-related utilities. Yes, believe it or not, you can pick up PD games at a fraction of the cost of normal games. More often than not, the software itself is free – all you have to pay for is the cost of the disk and a little something to cover the cost of duplication.

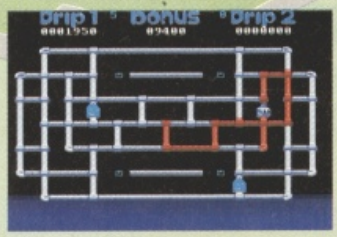
Every month, RAZE will be bringing you an indepth look at what's hot in the PD games scene. Obviously there's not a great deal going on in the console PD market, but if you own either an Atari ST, Amiga or PC, then Free Play is for you. This month, I'll just be looking at PD games, but in the future you can expect demos too.

DRIP!

AMIGA ■ TBAG ■ GTS

Brilliant. I remember this genre from years ago. *Painter* games used to be all the rage in the early Eighties. You know 'em; you had to fill in little blocks by going around their edges with a paint brush. Of course, things weren't that easy, even then, there were loads of creatures chasing you around too.

Drip! is basically an enhanced version which includes the same catchy gameplay with audio-visuals which are undoubtedly 16-bit. Now there are more hazards, including dripping pipes and flaming stop valves. For such an ancient game, *Drip!* is still a lot of fun. Highly recommended.



■ **Improved 16-bit graphics and sound make some old classics like *Painter* still addictive today.**

SOUND TRACKER

AMIGA, ATARI ST ■ THE OTHER PD LIBRARY

Sound Tracker has probably been used to create the background music in more games than any other sample sound sequencer. On the Amiga, it's virtually the industry standard for game music creation.

The good news is that *Sound Tracker* has now been ported across to the Atari ST, albeit in a rougher form. For people not familiar with *Sound Tracker*, the program uses lists of alphanumeric values to represent the actual music data. Songs are created by entering note values followed by the sample you want played. Although initially daunting, the editing system soon becomes easy to use.

Just like the Amiga version, ST *Sound Tracker* uses sampled sounds as its instruments. The program supports both ST and Amiga format samples, allowing use of the vast range of samples available in ST and Amiga PD libraries. If you've got an

ALL NEW STAR TREK

AMIGA ■ GTS

Star Trek fans are a fanatical lot – look through the PD libraries and you'll find countless games based upon the voyages of Captain Kirk and the Starship Enterprise. Fighting through the fodder, the best Star Trek game of all must undoubtedly be Tobias Richter's two disk *Star Trek* extravaganza.

■ **The Universe is yours. Plot your course and hit warp factor 12.**

As the main main, Cap'n K of the USS Enterprise, your job is to take command of the ship through its five year mission to boldly go where no man has gone before. During your mission, you'll encounter planets containing both hostile and friendly alien races. Of course, if they're hostile, just bring 'em back in line with Federation thinking with a few blasts of the old Enterprise lasers.

Occasionally you'll receive orders from Federation control, ordering the Enterprise to carry out special *Elite*-like missions. Succeed and you'll be the hero of the Federation. However, if you fail, you'll be space dust. Oh yeah, don't forget to keep check on the Enterprise engines as well, because she'll nay take it, Captain.

The bad news is that although *Star Trek* will run on a 512K machine, the game tends to spill bytes all over your desk. However, those of you with a megabyte or more will have a considerably better game, complete with funky sound effects.

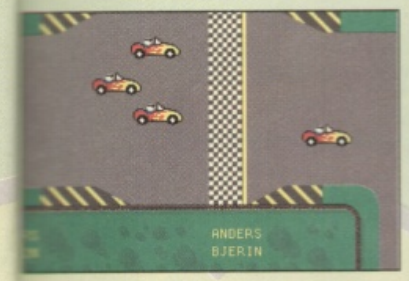
Amiga friend that also has *Sound Tracker*, you can even load Amiga tunes straight into the ST version. Quite remarkable.

86%

CAR

AMIGA ■ FISH DISK 336 ■ GTS

Where can you burn around corners at break-neck speeds in a vehicle that's about as street legal as the Batmobile? In a computer game of course!



■ ***Car* is another PD game stealing ideas from games of yesteryear. You've got to be quick at the wheel otherwise you'll find ourself offscreen more often than not.**

Car is PD version of the Atari arcade classic, *Super Sprint*. The aim of the game is to race around ten increasingly difficult tracks, trying to gain faster and faster lap times. Unlike *Super Sprint*, there's no-one racing against you, so your only opponent is time. Sounds easy? Not with a car that handles like a 2CV. As you take each corner, the car slides wildly around the track, lighting up its tyres with a digitised screech. Gripping stuff!

80%

SKI CONTEST

ATARI ST ■ GAM ■ FLOPPYSHOP

Crikey! This one brings back a few memories; this month's Free Play section is turning out to be quite a history lesson. Hands up if you remember *Horace Goes Skiing*. You know, that great *Frogger*-type game on the Spectrum? Oh well, perhaps I'm showing my age. Anyway, *Ski Contest* is based on that classic.

The idea is to safely cross a busy road to a ski shop, purchase some equipment and make your way to the piste. Once on the slopes, you are faced with a complex slalom course, complete with obstacles like trees and snowmen. Just make your way down the slope, in and out of the 'gates', and do the whole process again.

75%

HOW TO PD

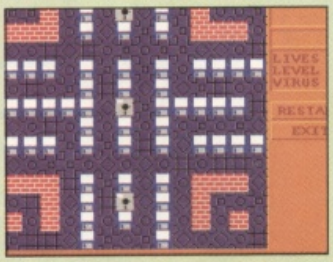
Every month we'll be checking out dirt (not *dirty*) cheap disks on the Amiga, Atari ST and IBM PC. All the games, demos, etc will be reviewed and rated. Unlike usual RAZE ratings, the Public Domain percentage doesn't take price into account (although the disks will have to cost next to nothing to be included in the column). The info bar, under the title of the disk, gives the format(s), disk number (where applicable) and PD library from which we received the disk. Due to the nature of PD, it is possible to get the same disk from a variety of libraries – and there are many. For lists of software, just ring any of the companies included in the suppliers list, most will be happy to send you info on all their disks.

SYS

AMIGA ■ FRED FISH 336 ■ GTS

From the author of *Car* (mentioned elsewhere) comes *Sys*, a fun *Pengo*-meets-*Pac-Man* arcade game featuring cutesy graphics, digitised sound effects and great gameplay. The idea behind the game is to rid a large mainframe computer system of computer viruses which have crippledit.

This is achieved by travelling through 50 screens of action, killing a range of evil viruses. In true *Pengo* fashion, your little virus buster isn't actually armed – instead he must kill the viruses by pushing blue floppy disks together, squashing the viruses against the walls or other disks.



■ **Ready, steady, push! *Sys* is a new slant on the old *Pengy* games – and a damn good one at that.**

83%

PD SUPPLIERS

There's a plethora of companies selling public domain games, demos and utilities. Here's just a small collection of suppliers holding Amiga and Atari ST disks. Look out for IBM PC discount disks in future issues of RAZE.

■ AMIGA ■ ATARI ST

- Amiganuts: (0703) 785680
- Amiga PD Library: (0742) 750623
- Atari Advantage: (0242) 224340
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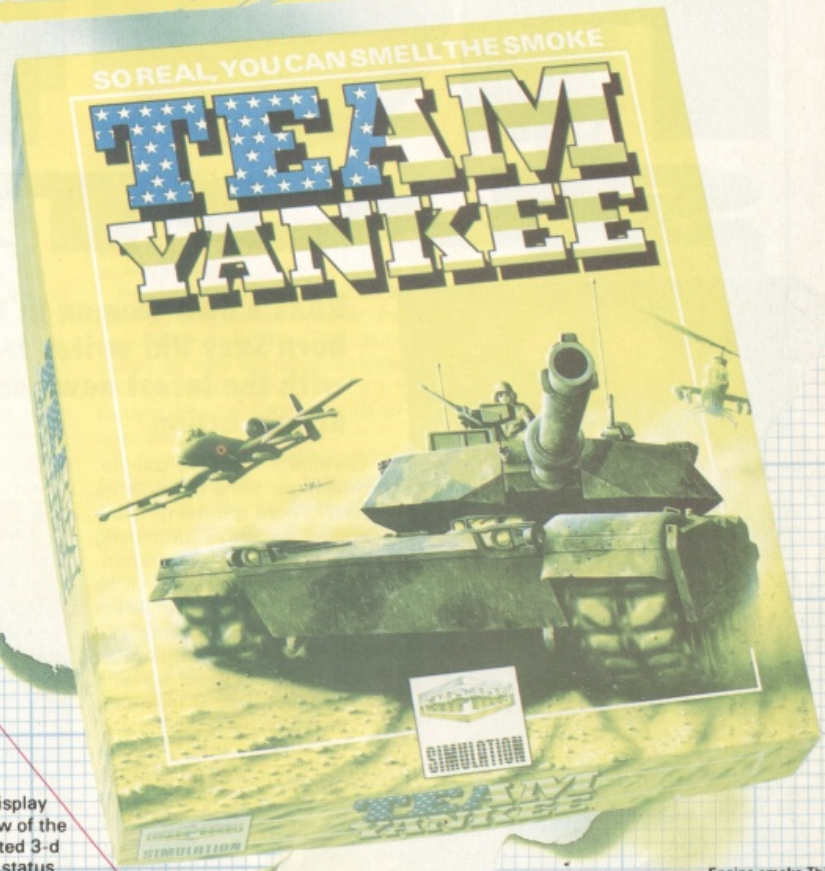
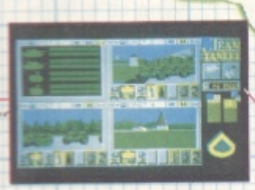
Capt. Sean Bannon snapped his head to the left. There was only one place where the Russians could be, and that was on the hill 2200 metres away. All the training, planning and preparations were over. Team Yankee was about to learn if the team's seventy nine men and twenty five million dollars worth of equipment could do what they were supposed to do.



Team Yankee is designed to test your leadership and tactical skills to the quick. You can display in either **"quadrant mode"** where all four platoons may be controlled at once

or

Full-screen Mode where the display homes in on just one platoon.



You have the flexibility to display either an overhead map view of the surrounding area, a simulated 3-d view of the battlefield, or a status screen showing the performance of all vehicles in a platoon. Irrespective of which screen mode you choose during battle, there is a constant column of information to the right of the screen.

To the right of the compasses are five icons which represent the various types of **weaponry** available to the unit.

- **MACHINE GUN** - which is always available to the player and has an 'infinite' number of rounds.
- **SMOKE** - a smoke grenade which allows enemy vision to be obscured.
- **HEAT** - a high explosive anti-tank round
- **SABOT** - an armor-piercing tungsten shell
- **TOW** - a high-range anti-tank missile

The major capability on the quadrant map screen is to alter the movement and formation of any platoon. The whole of the map may be viewed at once, or you may zoom into any portion of the battlefield using the icons to the right of the map.

Team Yankee is the definitive action simulation of modern tank warfare. Watch scenarios unfold on 3D battlefields with high definition graphics and keep track of the four tank platoons you control using the unique 4 quadrant display. Defend Hill 214 from Yuri Potecknov's crack tank platoons, attack Objective Link through sniper fire from forests, protect the Langen Gap from an entire Soviet tank battalion at night!

Engine smoke This will prove very useful in confusing your enemy if you find yourself in a tight corner.

Rotation icon and compass display.

Infra red (or thermal) **imaging** This feature is very useful for identifying vehicles camouflaged on the edge of forests. Contary to popular belief the thermal image is green and not red.

Zoom. When this icon is accessed the central portion of the screen is magnified by a factor of 10.

Laser range finder. The range finder will lock on to a reflective target if the firing cursor is placed directly over the object.

Wide formation icon. This increases the spacing between vehicles in your platoon to 100 metres.

Narrow formation icon. This reduces the inter-vehicle spacing in your platoon to 50 metres.

Vee. a vee formation.

Echelon left - places your vehicles on a right to left diagonal relative to your direction.

Wedge - places your vehicles in a wedge formation.

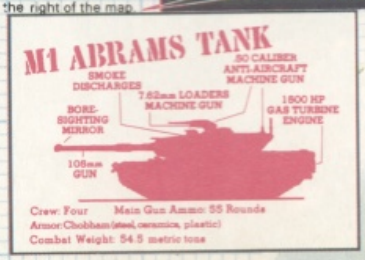
Scroll icon: The four arrows underneath the ETA display allow you to scroll your map in any of the four directions.

Dead Stop icon. This red icon, causes your platoon to come to a dead halt when clicked.

In line - places your vehicles in a line abreast relative to your direction.

Column - places your vehicles in a line ahead relative to your direction.

Echelon right - places your vehicles on a left to right diagonal relative to your direction.



Five major scenarios based on the battles featured in the New York Times No. 1 best seller Team Yankee.

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HOT SLOTS

RAZE's own Woman In Chains, Bangkok-born Suzy Uki writes from Hong Kong with the latest news on the world's arcade action

Gleetings, English people. Have I got some hot slots for you?! There are many, many wonderful games all making their way to England soon. That's why each month I'll be reviewing all of the latest machines, and keeping you informed with any titbits I can pick up on my street walks. If you don't hear it from me, then it ain't worth knowing.

Now that we're acquainted, here's a question. What do *Pole Position* and *Star Wars* have in common? Answer: they were two of the first ever sitdown arcade games – of course there wasn't the vibration for me, but the cockpit added atmosphere.

After several years, there came cabinets fitted out with several monitors each making up a large picture (like *Pole Position 2*). The physical realism improved, but it was not until vibrating beasts like *Enduro Racer* and the big, wobbling monstrosities like *Space Harrier* and *Afterburner* – sorry, getting a bit excited there – that things really hotted up.

Now, from the land of the rising hi-fi stack, a completely new sensation. Say hello and welcome to Sega's R360 and the start of a new era of arcade playing. The R360 is a partially enclosed sphere which allows the user to move in both planes through a complete 360 degrees. The first game on the R360 is *G-Loc*, which I've detailed elsewhere because it's coming out in a normal sitdown too.

PIGSKIN 621 AD

Bally/Midway

In the Dark Ages, the world's wildest warriors had a word for mind-blowing, bone-crunching, heart-stopping excitement... Pigskin! Today, history repeats itself as players flock to rediscover the white-knuckle exhilaration of competing head-to-head, as well as knee-to-groin and foot-to-face. This is the scenario of *Pigskin*, Bally's latest 'footbrawl' game.

Commanding an army of loyal fans you must crush your opponent's followers whilst trying to keep possession of the 'pigskin' ball. Handling a whole army isn't an easy task so it's vital your team has the right attitude. By pressing the Team Attitude Button you can choose from many tactics, like whether you want to be all-out aggressive, man-to-man or perhaps just block.

Pigskin features some impressive 3-D panorama techniques, providing some stunning graphics, along with the catchy Bally tunes that we have come to expect. There are also some realistic hoots, howls and hollas, all adding to the atmosphere.

■ **If you don't get excited playing this game, then you'd better see a doctor. The Asterix-inspired graphics in *Pigskin* are the most enjoyable Bally have come up with in a long time.**

The cartoon graphics remind me of those old Asterix books from France – really cute little guys who wield a mean blow. What really brings *Pigskin* alive, though, is the amazing sense of humour present. It's really good fun trying to keep ahold of the ball while smacking all that come near you. A game that everyone should play once or twice, although the addiction may be lost with time.

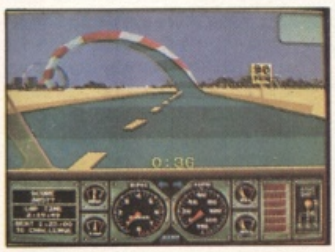
G-LOC
Sega

From the people that brought you the innovative *Out Run* and *Afterburner*, here's *G-Loc*. Look at the size of that chopper! I've seen some choppers in my time, but this really does take some beating. Is there no end to the size of these pleasure contraptions?

What do you mean, where's Tiny, Mark, Keop, Jason and Princess? This isn't that great Japanese TV cartoon G-Force; there's not a fiery phoenix in sight. This is the new G-Loc air-battle simulator, supposedly featuring some amazing new-fangled graphics that will impress no end(!). Admittedly, these graphics really are something else: smooth, accurate and very well drawn.

G-Loc can be found in two forms: the normal hydraulic cabinet commonplace with all Sega games now, and the brand-new spherical version detailed at the front of the column.

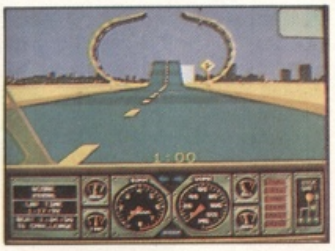
G-Loc is one of the most realistic air-battle games around. It's a far cry from *Afterburner*, featuring three game worlds, many more graphics and three difficulty levels. The technical spec also leaves *Afterburner* without fuel; there's a 16Mb graphics chip, 1Mb program memory and stereo FM music. The graphics are very impressive, with a great celebration sequence when you successfully complete a mission.



■ **Do The Corkscrew in Atari's worthy successor to *Hard Drivin'*.**

RACE DRIVIN'
Atari Games

Atari Games can sit back and relax in a hot bath now – possibly followed by a trip to the local massage parlour. Why? Because they have produced a game that will be raking in cash for months to come. They could all go home now, not worry about coming back to work till next year, and still be sure of decent half-year profits.



■ **Loopin' The Loop is much harder in *Race Drivin'*.**

If you thought *Hard Drivin'* looked like a hot little car game, you'll be awe-struck by *Race Drivin'*, the superb sequel.

People moaned and groaned that *Hard Drivin'* wasn't firm, er, hard enough for them. This little game'll satisfy all their recreational desires. This game is tough, in fact it's the hardest thing I've had my hands on in quite a while.

It features improved handling, a faster microprocessor, rumoured to have a 32MHz landmark speed, and more efficient software coding. This all results in a much faster and smoother final product. Amongst other new features are extra road tracks, a selection of several different cars, autocross track and two-player racing. This game really could be the *Pole Position* of the Nineties.

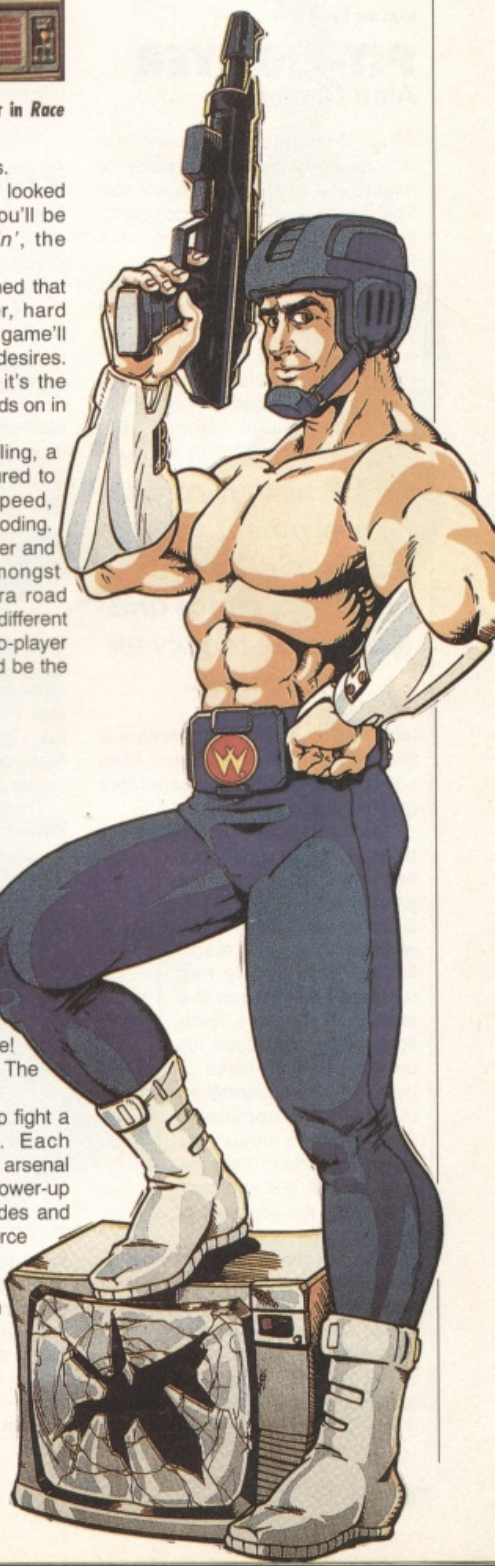
■ **Right: Sega's latest flight game will make *Afterburner* redundant. A 16Mb graphics chip ensures smooth animation and detailed flight sequences. Below: Giving a new definition to the phrase, 'just going for a spin'. The new R360 cabinet plus *G-Loc* – wow!**

SMASH TV
Williams

The year is 1999. The setting is a futuristic game show, top of the ratings, where contestants compete for large cash prizes. But the stakes are high, losers walk away with nothing – in fact they can't even walk away, they die! Does this sound anything like The Running Man?

You must enter an arena to fight a challenger to the death. Each contestant is armed with an arsenal of high-tech weapons and power-up devices, ranging from grenades and lasers to smart bombs and force fields. There are a wide range of opponents, drones, mutants, etc, culminating in the final showdown with a massive Sumo-sized gentleman.

The game's so like The Running Man, I don't know why it wasn't called that.



■ **With a scenario more like the film The Running Man than the original Stephen King book, *Smash TV* also bares more than a passing resemblance to *Gauntlet*.**

■ Confucious say, choose the fighter that kicks ass best!!

PIT-FIGHTER
Atari Games

After years in development, the ultimate fighting machine is ready for release – a what a big one it is too! The display screen is a whopping 25 inches, the control panel sticks out from the sides of the cabinet – so three players can take part without becoming the closest of friends (if you get my drift) – and the graphics are 100% digitised.

However, the digitised graphics may be the game's downfall – they are just too damn good, too pronounced. The graphics obviously look real, but they don't create a greater sense of realism than conventional computer-generated graphics.

In Puerto Rico, the government takes 40% of all profits made in casinos and spends the money on education.

You must choose between one of three fighters: each who have reached the highest level in a particular sport. Buzz is a world class wrestler, Ty is a mean kickboxer and Kato has reached tenth dan in the ancient art of karate. Each fighter also possesses his own lethal super-move, a move which is guaranteed to flatten his opponent. This move is obviously slower to perform than the other moves, and you can't keep using it if you want to win.

As each move is performed, a camera will zoom in to give a clearer perspective. After every fight each player is awarded a knockout bonus, a brutality bonus and a fight purse, whilst every third fight is a grudge match. The grudge match places all three fighters in the arena together.

After you've played around a bit, the elimination round separates the men from the boys. The survivor wins the honour of fighting the Masked Warrior – a title which you can take if you win the confrontation.

Niggles aside, the backgrounds are smooth-scrolling parallax, and the sound (digitised, of course) very realistic. With such playability and multi-player challenges, this can't fail to attract a crowd of people.

FOURTRAX
Namco

If you get your leg over only one thing this month, make sure it's Namco's Fourtrax unit – a multi-player game with a difference. If you thought two-player games were pretty amazing, get blown away by *Fourtrax*, a game where EIGHT cabinets can be connected together in series. The title doesn't refer to the innovative box design but to the game inside.

Lying inside each unit – from one on its own to eight in a row – is an *Enduro Racer* type game. But instead of using conventional motorbikes, you get a vibrating quad throbbing between your legs. As you try to give the ride of your life, the other competitors will do their best to give you a bang and knock you for six. The track is undulating and features jumps, ridiculously sharp bends, and an array of obstacles.

There's one drawback to an eight-player game, with eight units and eight bike seats – room. You won't see this at your local gay-cen, there just isn't the room. Persevere though, trek far and wide, it'll be worth seeking out. Just imagine a whole group of friends playing at once – the fight may not stay on the screen, it might spill out onto the street.

CHEAP ARCADE GAMES

Each arcade machine is originally an empty box. Most arcades buy the cabinets and insert their own games. These are stored in chip form – central processing unit (CPU), dedicated sound and graphics chips, etc – on a printed circuit board (PCB). Most PCBs are interchangeable with different cabinets and can cost upwards of £500 for a new game.

The new Mega-Tech system can take normal Mega Drive cartridges, costing just £29.99 each. The hardware and cabinet to run these machines is fairly simple, and therefore quite cheap. Subsequently, don't be surprised to see Mega-Tech systems popping up all over the place. They never go out of date (just insert a new cart) and recoup the initial expenditure within a few months.

MEGA-TECH SYSTEM
Sega

All you Mega Drivers out there will appreciate the technology squeezed into Sega's latest bit of innovation. Although not a new idea – Nintendo did a similar thing three years go – the thinking behind the Mega-Tech system is sure to get your heart pounding. Those clever boys at Sega have unleashed the full power of their Mega Drive in a full-size stand-up arcade machine. Of course, back when the Nintendo 8-bit console arcade machine came out it couldn't compete with the existing technology, but it did have 12 different games to choose from on the one machine. In fact, the old Nintendo idea turned out to be quite popular in the gay-cens (see Big in Japan on page 20 for an explanation of gay-cens – it's not what you think!). Sega's Mega-Tech system revolves around a similar principle.

There's a Mega Drive throbbing in the heart of the machine, doctored to handle all the cartridges you can shove in it. And the old girl will take quite a lot, eight at once in fact. And with the Mega Drive having graphics and sound capabilities on a par with most arcade machines, it's bound to be a success.

■ ***Ghouls 'n' Ghosts, Tetris* and *Forgotten Worlds* are just three of the possible eight cartridges in Sega's Mega-Tech System.**

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Promise to subscribe to twelve issues of RAZE, pay an introductory fine of £18* and we'll close an eye, possibly two. Convert your life sentence to twelve months probationary minimum. It's a bloody good deal. Don't waste any time making up your mind. The offer's on the table now, so take it or leave it.

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NEURO venture

There's a whole world of adventures out there. Whether you're into role playing games, strategy spectaculars, or political thrillers, Paul Rigby's the man to talk to. With more snippets than The News at Ten, here comes Neuroventure, a trip into a sensory reality

SEARCH FOR THE KING

ACCOLADE

■ GRAPHIC ADVENTURE ■

VERSIONS: IBM PC (£TBA)

I can see it now: 'Look Frank, Sierra are making a bundle on that *Leisure Suit Larry* kid. So waddya say we get a piece of the action? Yeah! A rip off! Swell idea, break out the hot chocolate.

Les Manley's the name – finding the king is the game. Les is a technician at an ailing radio station which launches a million dollar competition to "Find the King" in order to regain a bit of prestige.The King in question is Elvis Presley. Although he is never mentioned, you just know it's supposed to be him. Our Les decides to do a bit of searching himself.

Well it'll get him out of the rut he's in, job-wise, and might just endear him to Miss Stella Hart, a rather attractive lady who works as a secretary in the radio station.The game plays exactly like the famous Sierra animated graphic adventure titles – but lacks many of the class touches that make Sierra games such joys to behold. The sound driver, for example, is distinctly average – even on a Roland sound card (Adlib is supported too). Character movement is rather prehistoric, too.

'You ever jack tandem before?'

In Sierra games you click on a spot and the character moves to it. In King the mouse only serves as a four-way direction pointer (like the to features without explaining what they are and displays annotated diagrams that have no resemblance to the text that is supposed to describe them. Some of the annotations (letters, in this case) are placed next to non-existent features (there's a letter J which is supposed to highlight a feature explained in the text – but there is nothing there. The space is empty!).

East V West should have been a good game, I know it is there – somewhere – but the crazy manual and poor interface does a better job than the Berlin Wall ever did.

■ The King is dead! Long live the King. It's your job as a technician in an ailing radio station to track down Elvis.

● Oh woe! It appears that Origin's Todd Michael Porter has left the Britannia castle to join SSI as senior games developer. His first two projects are FASA's Renegade Legion and Interceptor. Fine, but what of the future of Origin's Knights of Legend, Todd's creation? What of the scenario disks, et al? Oh, woe!

● Right, gather round chaps and listen close. The word on the street is "Jorune". Yep, apparently this brand new RPG from Skyrealms Publications (still under development in the States) will be soooo good it will not only blow your socks off but ruffle even the most stifflygelled quiff!

● There are a group of Digital Wizards hanging around the Stateside orange groves, who've produced a rather nifty arcade/RPG called Heart of the Dragon. Aimed at 1Mb Amigas (although 512K machines can cope – just), the game copes with four graphic directions at once, in a unique four-view window interface. Not bad, eh?

EAST V WEST – BERLIN 1948

RAINBOW ARTS

■ POLITICAL THRILLER ■

VERSIONS: AMIGA (£24.99), ATARI ST (£24.99)

East v West takes place during the political tensions of the Berlin Airlift, when the Soviet Union had closed all routes to the German city besides the one air corridor controlled by the West. Through this piece of air space came the largest airlift the world had ever seen to ease the supplies blockade enforced upon West Berlin. It is at this point that fact takes a back seat and the game steps in. It appears that the Russkies have nabbed an atomic bomb that was lying on British soil, in a US air base, "just in case" things got nasty. It is up to you, Sam Porter, resplendent in silly fifties hair style, to get the bomb back. Besides the floppy disks and 72-page manual. Berlin contains an audio tape which makes for a wonderful intro sequence and (in the middle of the game) a 15 minute newsreel. This is an excellent way of promoting long storylines as there can be more higher quality sound made available. It takes no time to sync the game graphics to the audio cassette. Saves on computer memory too.

■ Included with the package is an audio cassette – this provides the game's atmosphere.

Graphics, you see a top-down view of your character, are well done. Life, as you walk the Berlin streets, carries on around you: people and cars pass you by, refuse collectors empty the bins, etc. It all adds to the atmosphere. Travel is by foot or taxi – you click on a large scale map, you're then whisked, by taxi, to that location.

The trouble begins when you want to talk to somebody and interact with characters (showing them objects, asking people about other characters, etc). The method used is overly complex, lacking in information and downright unfriendly. This is exasperated by the atrocious manual. It's so bad I wouldn't be surprised if it was translated by a Frenchman. Besides the poor grammar and spelling, the text refers

■ The action in *East V West* is viewed from above. Your brief is to retrieve an atomic bomb from the Russians.

cursor keys).The parser is okay, but nothing special and worse than Sierra's efforts. For example, a radio was blasting a 'Talk Show' out on the airwaves. Typing 'Listen to Talk Show' brought an error as the game thought I had typed three verbs – 'Listen', 'Talk' and 'Show.'

Graphics are good. Seeing your character's reflection in the rain soaked streets is a nice touch. Search for the King is not a bad first animated graphic adventure release for Accolade, although the system will need more work if they hope to approach Sierra's high standards.

ACTION STATIONS

STORM COMPUTERS ■ NAVAL STRATEGY SIMULATION ■ VERSIONS: AMIGA (£TBA), IBM PC (£24.95)

Originally developed by Conflict Analytics in the States, *Action Stations* is a tactical-level, surface-combat, naval simulation that covers the years 1922 to 1945. Created by an active American naval officer (who may be floating in a missile cruiser somewhere around Iraq as you read this), *AS* is based on the simulation of a classic wargame system used by the US Naval War College between 1922 and 1945.

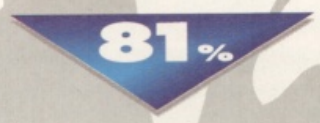
Whereas the War College used fire and effect tables to find the results of movement and combat, Conflict Analytics have sensibly configured the system to the computer.The game is supreme value for money as it contains 30 scenarios ranging from the Pacific to the Mediterranean. There is a scenario builder and scenario generator (using 180 ships) which pushes the limits of replay value into infinity. The *AS* system boasts three simulation models: damage, gunnery and torpedo. Other factors have, naturally, been taken into consideration. However, because individual models have been developed, you will experience some incredible detail that realistically mirrors naval warfare in this era.

For example, the torpedo has its own torpedo fire control for automatic firing. You will need to manually fire torpedoes on occasion though. The input requires you to specify which torpedo mount to fire from, the number of torpedoes to fire, the course of the centre torpedo, the spread angle between torpedoes, and the speed setting. That's just for torpedoes!

Other details include night missions, counter flooding, variable weather and sea conditions, on-board fires, a complicated damage system, and so on.

Technically, I can't fault *AS*. The only gripe I have is that the screen design is messy which hinders the beginner. For anyone remotely interested in naval warfare, this is a treat.

■ ***Action Stations*** **is based on the simulation of a classic wargame system used by the US Naval War College between 1922 and 1945. And as such is very accurate.**



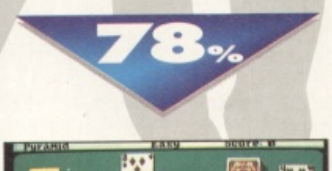
'He glanced quickly at the bar, in time to see the fat recoil-compensator on the barrel of the gun as it swung up...'

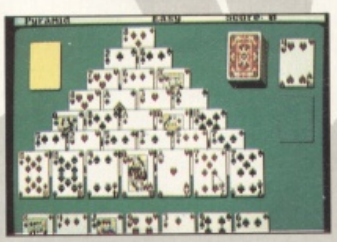
'I'm gonna click your sensorium up to audio and full visual so you can get into bein' here.'

HOYLE BOOK OF GAMES VOL 2

SIERRA ■ STRATEGY PACK ■ VERSIONS: ATARI ST (£TBA), AMIGA (£TBA), IBM PC (£29.99)

Following on with their Hoyle license of classic card games, Sierra have squeezed an amazing 28 versions of solitaire/patience into *Volume 2* of their book of games. Versions include Scorpion, Klondike, Fortress, 8 Off plus two of the author's own variants – Slide and Bowling. Arriving on two 5.25-inch disks or one 3.5-inch disk, *Volume 2* also includes a 72-page manual. Graphics are unspectacular and lack any of the nifty touches seen in *Volume 1*. All you see are cards, cards, cards. *Volume 2* really comes into its own if you have a laptop computer on a long journey aboard an aircraft or train. You don't need the space a full deck of cards requires and there is no danger of the game being upended by a clumsy co-passenger! However, even at home it'll pass the time successfully as all the games are quickly learnt and easy to get into. While not being a game that gets the knees trembling, *Volume 2* is good value for your money as it will provide long term enjoyment.





■ **Play 28 different versions of solitaire and still remain sane in Sierra's strategy pack,** ***Hoyle Book of Games Volume 2.***

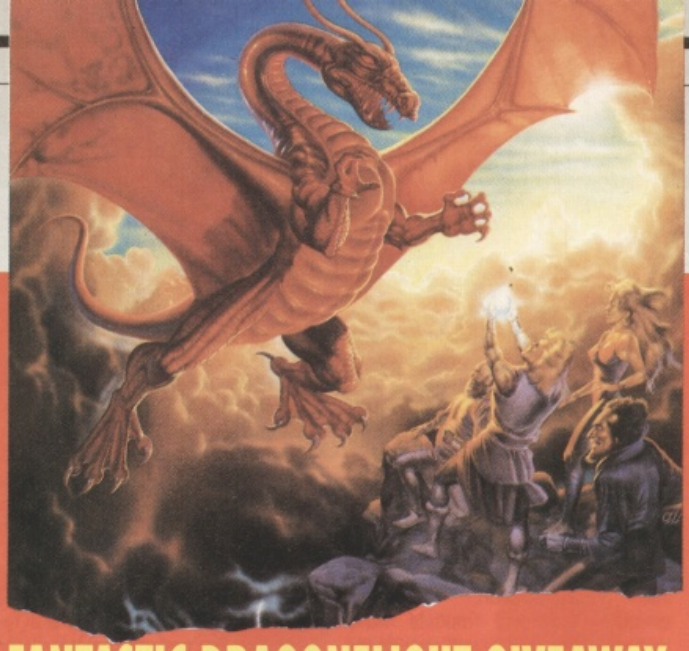
● California Dreams/Westwood Associates have teamed up together to produce Ancient Dreams. You play the illegitimate son of Zeus trying to get a seat on Mount Olympus. More news next month.

● Miles Computing, the creators of The Fool's Errand, are to introduce their computer RPG version of that classic table-top system, Champions, the superhero roleplayer.

● Paragon are following the stream of table-top RPG licenses by developing a PC version of Space 1889, an RPG that introduces rather Victorian space hardware – it's all steam and gas driven!

● Three-Sixty, creators of the wonderful Harpoon, have Aces of Aces II in the closet ready to leap forth. This action flight sim promises Hectic dogfights, split screen two-player action as well as modem-to-modem play. Three-Sixty also have a B-52 flight sim under development, with missions based upon the Dale Brown book, Flight of the Old Dog. Oh, then there's the submarine sim, Das Boot, but I'll leave that for another time.

'Does God live in Cyberspace?'



FANTASTIC DRAGONFLIGHT GIVEAWAY

Here's your chance to win a fabulous Philips RGB monitor suitable for connection to virtually any computer or console and a copy of Thalion's stunning role playing game Dragonflight.That's the first prize. Ten lucky runners-up receive an excellent copy of Dragonflight.

The Philips monitor, courtesy of Thalion, is worth in excess of £200. By plugging your machine into it, you get a better, brighter picture. No more hogging the TV when everyone else wants to watch Neighbours and no more eye-strain due to poor picture quality.

Thalion's Dragonflight is a strategy role playing game in which you must discover what happened to the dragons that once thrived in the vale. You control four characters in your quest. Dragonflight is an audio visual treat that is designed to thrill.

RULES

Entries must be received by October 31st. Anything received after that date will be thrown at the Ushers brewery bods across the street. Newsfield and Thalion employees are not eligible. The winners list will be announced in a forthcoming issue of RAZE.

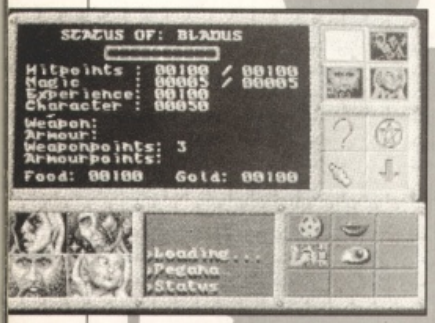
WINNING STREAK

So what do you have to do to get your mits on these fabulous prizes? Nothing could be simpler. Answer the three multiple choice questions below and put your answers on a postcard or back of an envelope and address your entry to: **Dragonflight Giveaway, RAZE, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8LH.**

What does RPG stand for?
A. Royal played game.
B. Role playing game.
C. Really pathetic game.

Does RGB mean?
A. Really good box.
B. Right good bonk.
C. Red, green blue.

NPC stands for what?
A. Non-player character.
B. Night players club.
C. Not player checked.



■ A very efective menuing system has been employed in *Dragonflight* which cuts down excessive mouse movement.

DRAGONFLIGHT

THALION
■ FANTASY RPG ■
VERSIONS: AMIGA (£34.99), ATARI ST (£34.99)

Dragonflight provides a top-down view of the surface landscape with a first-person perspective down in t' dungeons. Basically the story involves finding out what has happened to the dragons that once thrived in the vale. You control four, pre-rolled, characters during the quest.

The principle elements of the game system are standard in this genre. Visit a variety of towns, buy weapons and food, talk to people and hang around taverns for information. Thalion have developed a very efficient menu system that cuts down excessive mouse motion. Interaction is nothing special; just a matter of clicking on the mouth icon. No parser or keyword system is employed. NPC (non-player character) replies are wordy.

During combat your view shifts to a close up side-on perspective, complete with animated action after you despatch your orders. The problem is that movement occurs only in four directions and attacking only in two directions. How this abberation was allowed to get through initial design is beyond me. Also, only the person who kills a monster gets the experience and gold – even if a colleague has done most of the work. Unfair, me thinks.

One positive aspect of the game is that you are not bombarded by millions of monsters. They do appear, but at a realistic rate. Magic is handled well; each character must learn spells. Only one spell at a time may be held in memory.

Dragonflight is a very worthy RPG – certainly not the best on the market, but one that will provide many hours of entertainment. The combat system is certainly deficient and much of the accepted gloss of more recent RPGs is missing.

77%

KING'S BOUNTY

NEW WORLD/US GOLD
■ FANTASY STRATEGY RPG ■
VERSIONS: AMIGA (£24.99), IBM PC (£29.99)

King Maximus, bless his little cotton socks, has had his Sceptre of Order stolen by a bunch of villains. You have to retrieve it for him. Why? Because the Sceptre unites the four continents and without it chaos rules.

First, you choose your character (Knight, Paladin, etc). Each character has its own specific advantages and each will increases its stats once villains are caught. You'll need an army to fight the rising hordes, though. Cash will be needed to recruit extra men, magic-users (an increasingly powerful and useful group), monsters, etc. There are are 25 different types to choose from.

The basic idea in *King's Bounty* is to pick up contracts to nab villains. Catch them and you get a section of map (there are 25 bits in all). Get them all and the map will tell you where the sceptre is – there is a time

● Masters of Strategy, Koei, are planning to release their new Napoleonic wargame, L'Empereur, around Christmas time.

● Interstel have a new space strategy game lined up. Called Armada 2525, it is a one- to six-player cerebral-'em-up that has a Reach for the Stars look about it.

● Version 2.0 of John Barnsley's Adventurer's PD Library on the ST is out and about. One of the highlights of this non-profitmaking service are the on-disk files displaying adventure maps and RPG levels. I had a look at the Bloodwych, Police Quest 1, Indiana Jones and Space Quest III maps and was very impressed by them all (there are many more available). Ask John for a catalogue disk at 32 Merrivale Road, Rising Brook, Stafford, Staffordshire ST17 9EB.

GREAT QUOTATIONS OF OUR TIME: 1
"That's entertainment!"
– Vlad the Impaler

limit in which to search though.

When you meet a wandering monster you launch into the combat view. Each monster type is represented complete with the total number of monsters. Monsters take turns striking opponents. Although the emphasis is placed on combat, it is all lightweight and there are no real tactical problems. Most of the thought goes into recruitment and organization. Graphics are pretty without being stunning and sound is nothing special.

The game comes on two disks and has a 63-page manual. It's a cross between RPG and strategy, and appears to be a variation on SSI's *Sword of Aragon*.

King's Bounty is not a game packed with detail. It does, however, have many interesting features that make you return time and again. Recommended.

81%

■ *King's Bounty* is an enormous RPG that has you chasing villains in order to retrieve King maximus' Sceptre of Order.

IceBreakers

Those of you who are having trouble breaking through the ICE (Intrusion counter electronics) of adventures, RPGs and strategy games, jack into this node for the best advice, hints and tips around.

WINDWALKER

All Formats

For those of you facing ninjas, it'll come as no surprise that the flying leap is the most dangerous manoeuvre during battle. You can guess the move, however, because the attacker will always crouch down before leaping. When you see an opponent doing this, take a step backwards and then shuffle back and forth. After he lands in a crouch – bop him one, a high kick is effective.

LEISURE SUIT LARRY III

Amiga, IBM PC

At Fat city, use that keycard you got in divorce decree to open the door on the left. Get the locker number from the back of the keycard found at the upper left of the maze. The locker combination, itself, comes from the manual page that has the advertisement for the business. Change into the sweat suit and don't forget to close the locker or your leisure suit gets stolen– as to who would be deranged enough to want to steal your leisure suit, is another matter. Do 23 (honest!) repetitions of each exercise, then dive for the shower.

HERO'S QUEST 1

Amiga, IBM PC

Buy a flame dart. Fetch and open from Zara. Find detect magic by asking Meeps, who is due west of town, about magic. Find Trigger by casting Detect near the waterfall (two south, two east of town), climbing ladder, knocking on the door, going in and asking Hermit about magic spells.

SWORD OF ARAGON

Amiga, IBM PC

Earn 72,000 pieces of gold by killing the dragon just east of Gernock. The Amulet of Aladda is found in an altar in a field of mud (ugh!) north of Zarnix. Don't forget, though, that you must return to Tetrada with the amulet, sceptre and crown to be proclaimed ruler of Aragon. Other general tips include: the city of Sur Nova has no standing army and is easy to capture. Beware of giant attacks and be sure to leave a sufficient garrison force to hold it. Defeating the city of Char returns the wand to the Lady of the Lake (no, not that one) and causes Tatula to prosper. Also, once you've defeated Gernock, abandon it. But tis surely madness, you cry! Not really, the constant Orc attacks are just not worth the hassle.

STARFLIGHT 2

IBM PC

The best crew for this mammoth Electronic Arts space RPG is a human captain, human science officer, Velox navigator, Velox engineering officer, Thrynn communications officer and Elowan medical officer. From the off, buy good engines and train your crew in navigation and communications. Then zip to 206, 106 and visit the colonised planet to buy lots of stinging cones. Do the business a few times and then take the bundle to 201, 104. Barter well and you should receive a good price for you cones (around 1,000 credits is pretty good). Oh, log 133, 7 while you're about it.

CHAOS STRIKES BACK

Atari ST

The game consists of ten levels that can be mapped on a grid 46 squares east/west and 47 squares north/south – though no levels require the entire grid. With the bottom level as level one, the starting square is on level six, 20N 29E and the junction of the ways is at level three, 29N 23E. Use pits and stairs for correct relative positioning of different levels. Many rooms can only be reached by falling or climbing through a pit from the level above.

Map kite tout mize ak tout giyon'

● Impressions have released the Amiga version of Omnitrend's SF RPG, Universe III (the ST version should be around too). Coming on two disks with a 15-page manual you must make sure the Earth's diplomatic mission succeeds – even though you know a traitor is on board ship (gasp)!

● CCS have released an ST version of Encyclopedia of War – Ancient Battles. Arriving on two disks, with two manuals, Ancient Battles is RT Smith's extensive look at the armies of yestercentury. Options include a design-your-own-army feature from one of 24 different nations. Ancient Battles is STE compatible.

● US Gold are ready for a mid-October release with an interesting AD&D game from SSI. Why interesting? Well, prepare yourself for an AD&D game – with puzzles! Quick, catch that lady before she faints! Due out on Amiga, ST & PC, Shadow Sorcerer is a 3-D isometric RPG in which the DragonLance characters must escort fleeing refugees from the Draconian hordes.

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RAZE THAT WORD

So you've read the first issue by now – what do you think? I hope you have a better opinion of it than our letters editor, Jonnie Slagman, who seems to like nothing in life. The guy just loves nothing more than a good slanging match. In fact, heeeeere's Jonnie...

Celestial coin-ops

Whilst perusing through my local parish newsletter, I was concerned to read an article about the influence of amusement arcades upon the establishment – especially the young children. As you are one of the potential purveyors of the virtues if these evil machines, I felt it necessary to write to you before you commit any actions that you may later regret.

How can you encourage young children to enter their local arcades and spend vast sums of money of these machines? These machines can be the route of evil. It is a well known fact that some children actually steal money, or sell their parents' belongs to get enough money to complete the top games like *Afterburner* or *Out Run*. It can become an addictive habit which all too often ends up in tears for all involved.

I realise that you will only feature the 'games' machines, and these aren't as bad as the 'one-armed bandits', but surely once in the arcade environment it is far too easy to be emersed in the flashing lights and pretty pictures and forget the value of money. These areas are well-known meeting areas for shady characters so I seriously suggest you remove these features from the magazine or you could be held liable for the habits of a generation.

Mary Blackhouse
Milton Keynes

Cor, what a wet rag. I bet you're the sort of person who wants football matches banned just because of a few stabbings now and then – hey, that's life! Still, we know only too well the dangers of arcade rooms – there's a place in Trowbridge I wouldn't fancy staying in for too long, know what I mean? – and we trust that RAZE readers are responsible enough not to get involved in the seedier side. We do have some morals and refuse to cover any sort of fruit machines. Although this doesn't stop Julian popping out at lunch time to throw a few quid away on the local pub's machine – some people are beyond rescue.

Tight fisted

Unaccustomed as I am to spending money, it was a tough decision I had to make when I saw the adverts for RAZE in last issue's TGM magazine. Should I go for the amazing half-price subscriptions offer, or wait till the first issue at the risk of having to subscribe at full wack. Regardless, I love the concept of a console/16-bit magazine.

It's about time we got rid of all those rubbish 8-bit computers and concentrated on the future. I just wish everyone in Israel would wake up to the facts of life and dump their 8-bit machines for the super 16-bits. An 8-bit computer in Israel is about as welcome as a pork sausage at a bar mitzvah.

Robert Cohen
ISRAEL

What do you mean it was a tough decision? Can't you tell a bargain when you see one? This issue of RAZE, despite the presence of Les and Julian, is the greatest thing since... well, since they asked me to host the letters column. And that was only two weeks ago. Er, what I am saying? Who cares!

Can you supply?

When word of a new magazine reached my humble abode I was filled with expectation. Will the mag feature arcades? Will it cover consoles? Will it have a design which is both exciting and legible? Ultimately, will it treat its readers with respect? Well, will you?

Eddie Felson
Poole

Not asking for much, are you? Arcades, the disgusting smelly things, will certainly be around. And our own disgusting column writer, Suzy Uki, will be at the forefront the arcade action. If you must have consoles, make sure you don't start writing in comparing them all like the 16-bit computers of a few years back. As for a legible design – probably, if you're lucky.

And what's all this twaddle about reader respect? Ha! Not from me. As for the other balloon-brains around here, they can't even spell respect.

SURPRISE GIFTS

Look, I realise that the content of some this month's letters isn't exactly GQ standard and that's why I'm giving you an incentive to write in with your best products of pensmanship. Every month, I'll pick out the best you can come up with and chuck it in the bin. Only kidding, I'll get it preserved in an airtight picture frame and slap it on the wall next to my picture of Selina Scott. The winner of this accolade will receive a special secret gift from the RAZE warehouse – it could be a T-shirt, a game, a dead rat... who knows? Just get writing to me, Jonnie Slagman, at RAZE Magazine, Unit 3, 7 Back Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8LH.

NEXT MONTH IN RAZE

ELITISTVIEWS
We told you not to feed programmers after midnight... we warned you about exposing them to sunlight, and most important of all we told you never to let them near water. Did you listen?

BIG IN JAPAN
Scanned and delivered! Shintaro sniffs out the seedy software scene in Japan and finds he doesn't have to dig deep to find the dirt.

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